



# LENIN

**WORKERS OF ALL COUNTRIES, UNITE!**

**V.I. LENIN**  
**SELECTED WORKS**  
**IN THREE VOLUMES**

**3**





**ИНСТИТУТ МАРКСИЗМА-ЛЕНИНИЗМА при ЦК КПСС**

**В. И. ЛЕНИН**

**ИЗБРАННЫЕ ПРОИЗВЕДЕНИЯ**

**В ТРЕХ ТОМАХ**

**ИЗДАТЕЛЬСТВО ПОЛИТИЧЕСКОЙ ЛИТЕРАТУРЫ  
МОСКВА**

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V I I N

**SELECTED WORKS**

**IN THREE VOLUMES**

**3**



**RETROCONVERTED**

**B C S. C. L.**

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В. И. ЛЕНИН  
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## PREFACE

Volume Three of the *Selected Works* of V. I. Lenin covers the period from October 1918 to March 1923 included. In his writings and speeches of this period Lenin elaborates highly important propositions of Marxist theory, deals with problems concerning the defence of the country, works out the plan for the construction of socialism, substantiates the principles of the Soviet state's foreign policy, and considers problems of the world communist movement.

"Theses of the Central Committee of the Russian Communist Party (Bolsheviks) on the Situation on the Eastern Front", "All Out for the Fight Against Denikin! *Letter of the Central Committee of the Russian Communist Party (Bolsheviks) to Party Organizations*", "Letter to the Workers and Peasants Apropos of the Victory over Kolchak", "The Example of the Petrograd Workers", and other works reflect the tremendous work done by the Communist Party and its Central Committee headed by Lenin to organise the defeat of the interventionist and whiteguard forces.

In the exceedingly difficult wartime conditions Lenin continued to work a great deal on the theoretical questions of the socialist revolution, the dictatorship of the proletariat, and the period of transition from capitalism to socialism.

In October-November 1918 Lenin wrote a major work, *The Proletarian Revolution and the Renegade Kautsky*, in which he exposed the revisionist views of Kautsky and other opportunists who denied the need for the socialist revolution and the dictatorship of the working class. In this work he also dealt with cardinal problems of the proletarian state and made a profound analysis of the historic experience of the Great October Socialist Revolution.

In his letter "Greetings to the Hungarian Workers", his articles "Economics and Politics in the Era of the Dictatorship of the Proletariat", "A Great Beginning. *Heroism of the Workers in the Rear. 'Communist Subbotniks'*", and "From the Destruction of the Old Social System to the Creation of the New", Lenin specified the functions and the tasks of the dictatorship of the proletariat,

considered problems connected with the laws of economics and the mutual relations of the classes in the transition period, and with the formation of socialist and then communist social relations.

A large part of this volume is taken up by works written by Lenin after the Civil War, when the Soviet country entered on a new period of its development, and the Soviet people, having safeguarded the gains of the October Revolution and the existence of the Republic of Soviets, was faced with the immediate tasks of socialist construction. In his articles, reports to Party congresses, and letters relating to this period, Lenin, summing up the experience of the first years of Soviet power, profoundly elucidated all aspects of the questions, both general and concrete, concerning the creation of the new, socialist society, problems of state, economic and cultural construction. Of especially notable significance are Lenin's last letters and articles, rightfully called his political testament: "Letter to the Congress", "Granting Legislative Functions to the State Planning Commission", "The Question of Nationalities or 'Autonomisation'", "Pages from a Diary", "On Co-operation", "Our Revolution (*Apropos of N. Sukhanov's Notes*)", "How We Should Reorganise the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection (*Recommendation to the Twelfth Party Congress*)", and "Better Fewer, But Better". They were the concluding stage of Lenin's elaboration of the plan for building socialism in the U.S.S.R. They expounded in a generalised form the programme for the country's socialist transformation based on the prospects of the world liberation movement.

One of Lenin's major contributions to the theory and practice of scientific communism was his elaboration of the New Economic Policy (NEP), the only correct policy of the proletarian state during the period of transition from capitalism to socialism, providing for a firm economic and political alliance of the working class and the peasantry, for laying the economic foundation of socialism. The problems of the New Economic Policy were elucidated in the report on the substitution of a tax in kind for the surplus-grain appropriation system presented to the Tenth Congress of the R.C.P.(B.), the pamphlet *The Tax in Kind (The Significance of the New Policy and Its Conditions)*, the "Theses for a Report on the Tactics of the R.C.P." at the Third Congress of the Communist International, in the articles "Fourth Anniversary of the October Revolution" and "The Importance of Gold Now and After the Complete Victory of Socialism", the Political Report of the Central Committee of the R.C.P.(B.) to the Eleventh Party Congress, and the report "Five Years of the Russian Revolution and the Prospects of the World Revolution", made at the Fourth Congress of the Communist International.

Lenin attached great importance to the correct mutual relations between the peoples of the U.S.S.R., their friendship and unity. The question of nationalities and the national policy of the Communist Party were dealt with in a number of works: the Report on the Party Programme delivered at the Eighth Congress of the R.C.P.(B.), "Address to the Second All-Russia Congress of Communist Organisations of the Peoples of the East" (November 22, 1919), "Letter to the Workers and Peasants of the Ukraine Apropos of the Victories over Denikin", "Preliminary Draft Theses on the National and the Colonial Questions (*For the Second Congress of the Communist International*)", "Report of the Commission on the National and the Colonial Questions" to the Second Congress of the Communist International, the letters "On the Establishment of the U.S.S.R." and "The Question of Nationalities or 'Autonomisation'".

The works included in the present volume are penetrated with Lenin's thought and Lenin's concern for the strengthening of the Party. Worthy of special mention are such works as: 'Results of Party Week in Moscow and Our Tasks', "Once Again on the Trade Unions, the Current Situation and the Mistakes of Trotsky and Bukharin", "Preliminary Draft Resolution of the Tenth Congress of the R.C.P. on Party Unity", "Preliminary Draft Resolution of the Tenth Congress of the R.C.P. on the Syndicalist and Anarchist Deviation in Our Party", Speech in Closing the Eleventh Congress of R.C.P.(B.), "Letter to the Congress", and "How We Should Reorganise the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection".

A number of the works are devoted to the foreign policy of the Communist Party and the Soviet state. They are: "Draft Resolution on Foreign Policy" adopted by the Eighth All-Russia Conference of the R.C.P.(B.), "In Reply to Questions Put by Karl Wiegand, Berlin Correspondent of Universal Service", "Interview with Lincoln Eyre, Correspondent of the American newspaper *The World*", "Draft Directives of the C.C., R.C.P.(B.) for the Soviet Delegation to the Genoa Conference", "Draft Decision of the C.C., R.C.P.(B.) on the Tasks of the Soviet Delegation at Genoa", and the "Letter to G. V. Chicherin" (February 16, 1922). Important principles of foreign policy developed by Lenin are contained in the "Report of the All-Russia Central Executive Committee and the Council of People's Commissars on the Home and Foreign Policy" (December 22) at the Eighth All-Russia Congress of Soviets, and in the "Political Report of the Central Committee of the R.C.P.(B.)" (March 27) at the Eleventh Party Congress.

A considerable part of the volume is taken up by Lenin's writings and speeches devoted to questions concerning the international communist movement.

Lenin tirelessly exposed Right opportunism, social-reformism and revisionism as the principal enemy in the working-class movement. At the same time Lenin resolutely came out against "Left" opportunism, against dogmatism and sectarianism in the Communist Parties, which pushed them on to the fatal path of divorce from the working masses. He repeatedly pointed out that dogmatism in theory and politics plays into the hands of revisionism, and stressed the need for creatively developing Marxist theory in its application to the new historical situation, for proceeding from the essence of Marxism, and on that basis making a concrete analysis of the concrete situation.

The volume includes the outstanding work of revolutionary Marxism, "*Left-Wing*" *Communism—an Infantile Disorder*, in which Lenin gave a devastating criticism of "Left-wing doctrinaireism" and, summing up the experience of the revolutionary movement in Russia and other countries, elucidated the most important questions of strategy and tactics of the Communist Parties.

In the "Theses and Report on Bourgeois Democracy and the Dictatorship of the Proletariat" (March 4) at the First Congress of the Communist International, the "Theses for the Second Congress of the Communist International" and his speeches at the Congress, the "Remarks on the Draft Theses on Tactics for the Third Congress of the Communist International. *Letter to G. Y. Zinoviev*" and in his speech in defence of the tactics of the Communist International at the Congress, in his articles "On the Tenth Anniversary of *Pravda*", and "Better Fewer, But Better" Lenin analysed the motive forces and the prospects of the world revolutionary process after the splitting of the world into two systems—the socialist and the capitalist and substantiated the programmatic, organisational and tactical principles of the international communist movement.

In all countries, Lenin wrote, Communism is being steeled and is growing. Communism has now become the greatest force of our time. And no reactionary forces are in a position to stop the triumphant advance of the ideas of communism.

Leninism is a great international teaching. It arms the working people of all countries with a clear understanding of the paths of struggle for a bright future, with confidence in the victory of the forces of peace and progress, in the inevitable triumph of socialism and communism throughout the world.

*Institute of Marxism-Leninism,  
Central Committee of the C.P.S.U.  
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# THE PROLETARIAN REVOLUTION AND THE RENEGADE KAUTSKY

## PREFACE

Kautsky's pamphlet, *The Dictatorship of the Proletariat*, recently published in Vienna (Wien, 1918, Ignaz Brand, 63 pp.) is a most lucid example of that utter and ignominious bankruptcy of the Second International about which all honest socialists in all countries have been talking for a long time. The proletarian revolution is now becoming a practical issue in a number of countries, and an examination of Kautsky's renegade sophistries and his complete renunciation of Marxism is therefore essential.

First of all, it should be emphasised, however, that the present author has, from the very beginning of the war, repeatedly pointed to Kautsky's rupture with Marxism. A number of articles published between 1914 and 1916 in *Sotsial-Demokrat*<sup>1</sup> and *Kommunist*,<sup>2</sup> issued abroad, dealt with this subject. These articles were afterwards collected and published by the Petrograd Soviet under the title *Against the Stream*, by G. Zinoviev and N. Lenin (Petrograd, 1918, 550 pp.). In a pamphlet published in Geneva in 1915 and translated at the same time into German and French<sup>3</sup> I wrote about "Kautskyism" as follows:

"Kautsky, the leading authority in the Second International, is a most typical and striking example of how a verbal recognition of Marxism has led in practice to its conversion into 'Struvism' or into 'Brentanoism' [i. e., into a bourgeois-liberal theory recognising the non-revolutionary "class" struggle of the proletariat, which was expressed most clearly by Struve, the Russian writer, and Brentano, the German economist]. Another example is Plekhanov. By means of patent sophistry, Marxism is stripped of its revolutionary living spirit; *everything* is recognised in Marxism *except* the revolutionary methods of struggle, the propaganda and preparation of those methods, and the education of the masses in this direction. Kautsky 'reconciles' in an unprincipled way the fundamental idea of social-chauvinism, recognition of defence of



the fatherland in the present war, with a diplomatic sham concession to the Lefts—his abstention from voting for war credits, his verbal claim to be in the opposition, etc. Kautsky, who in 1909 wrote a book on the approaching epoch of revolutions and on the connection between war and revolution, Kautsky, who in 1912 signed the Basle Manifesto<sup>4</sup> on taking revolutionary advantage of the impending war, is outdoing himself in justifying and embellishing social-chauvinism and, like Plekhanov, joins the bourgeoisie in ridiculing any thought of revolution and all steps towards the immediate revolutionary struggle.

"The working class cannot play its world-revolutionary role unless it wages a ruthless struggle against this backsliding, spinelessness, subservience to opportunism, and unparalleled vulgarisation of the theories of Marxism. Kautskyism is not fortuitous; it is the social product of the contradictions within the Second International, a blend of loyalty to Marxism in word and subordination to opportunism in deed" (G. Zinoviev and N. Lenin, *Socialism and War*, Geneva, 1915, pp.13-14).

Again, in my book *Imperialism, the Latest Stage of Capitalism*,\* written in 1916 and published in Petrograd in 1917, I examined in detail the theoretical fallacy of all Kautsky's arguments about imperialism. I quoted Kautsky's definition of imperialism: "Imperialism is a product of highly developed industrial capitalism. It consists in the striving of every industrial capitalist nation to bring under its control or to annex all large areas of *agrarian* [Kautsky's italics] territory, irrespective of what nations inhabit it."\*\* I showed how utterly incorrect this definition was, and how it was "adapted" to the glossing over of the most profound contradictions of imperialism, and then to reconciliation with opportunism. I gave my own definition of imperialism: "Imperialism is capitalism at that stage of development at which the dominance of monopolies and finance capital is established; at which the export of capital has acquired pronounced importance; at which the division of the world among the international trusts has begun; at which the division of all territories of the globe among the biggest capitalist powers has been completed".\*\*\* I showed that Kautsky's critique of imperialism is on an even lower plane than the bourgeois, philistine critique.

Finally, in August and September 1917—that is, before the proletarian revolution in Russia (October 25 [November 7], 1917), I wrote a pamphlet (published in Petrograd at the beginning of 1918) entitled *The State and Revolution. The Marxist Theory of the State and the Tasks of the Proletariat in the Revolu-*

\* See present edition, Vol. 1, pp. 634-731.—Ed.

\*\* Ibid., p. 699.—Ed.

\*\*\* Ibid., p. 698.—Ed.

tion.\* In Chapter VI of this book, entitled "The Vulgarisation of Marxism by the Opportunists", I devoted special attention to Kautsky, showing that he had completely distorted Marx's ideas, tailoring them to suit opportunism, and that he had "repudiated the revolution in deeds, while accepting it in words".

In substance, the chief theoretical mistake Kautsky makes in his pamphlet on the dictatorship of the proletariat lies in those opportunist distortions of Marx's ideas on the state—the distortions which I exposed in detail in my pamphlet, *The State and Revolution*.

These preliminary remarks were necessary for they show that I openly accused Kautsky of being a renegade *long before* the Bolsheviks assumed state power and were condemned by him on that account.

## HOW KAUTSKY TURNED MARX INTO A COMMON LIBERAL

The fundamental question that Kautsky discusses in his pamphlet is that of the very essence of proletarian revolution, namely the dictatorship of the proletariat. This is a question that is of the greatest importance for all countries, especially for the advanced ones, especially for those at war, and especially at the present time. One may say without fear of exaggeration that this is the key problem of the entire proletarian class struggle. It is, therefore, necessary to pay particular attention to it.

Kautsky formulates the question as follows: "The contrast between the two socialist trends" (i.e., the Bolsheviks and non-Bolsheviks) "is the contrast between two radically different methods: the *dictatorial* and the *democratic*" (p. 3).

Let us point out, in passing, that when calling the non-Bolsheviks in Russia, i.e., the Mensheviks<sup>5</sup> and Socialist-Revolutionaries,<sup>6</sup> socialists, Kautsky was guided by their *name*, that is, by a word, and not by the *actual place* they occupy in the struggle between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie. What a wonderful understanding and application of Marxism! But more of this later.

For the moment we must deal with the main point, namely, with Kautsky's great discovery of the "fundamental contrast" between "democratic and dictatorial methods". That is the crux of the matter; that is the essence of Kautsky's pamphlet. And that is such an awful theoretical muddle, such a complete renunciation of Marxism, that Kautsky, it must be confessed, has far excelled Bernstein.

See present edition, Vol. 2, pp. 238-327—*Ed.*

The question of the dictatorship of the proletariat is a question of the relation of the proletarian state to the bourgeois state, of proletarian democracy to bourgeois democracy. One would think that this is as plain as a pikestaff. But Kautsky, like a school-master who has become as dry as dust from quoting the same old textbooks on history, persistently turns his back on the twentieth century and his face to the eighteenth century, and for the hundredth time, in a number of paragraphs, in an incredibly tedious fashion chews the old cud over the relation of bourgeois democracy to absolutism and medievalism!

It sounds just like he were chewing rags in his sleep!

But this means he utterly fails to understand what is what! One cannot help smiling at Kautsky's effort to make it appear that there are people who preach "contempt for democracy" (p. 11) and so forth. That is the sort of twaddle Kautsky uses to befog and confuse the issue, for he talks like the liberals, speaking of democracy in general, and not of *bourgeois* democracy; he even avoids using this precise, class term, and, instead, tries to speak about "pre-socialist" democracy. This windbag devotes almost one-third of his pamphlet, twenty pages out of sixty-three, to this twaddle, which is so agreeable to the bourgeoisie, for it is tantamount to embellishing bourgeois democracy, and obscures the question of the proletarian revolution.

But, after all, the title of Kautsky's pamphlet is *The Dictatorship of the Proletariat*. Everybody knows that this is the very *essence* of Marx's doctrine; and after a lot of irrelevant twaddle Kautsky *was obliged* to quote Marx's words on the dictatorship of the proletariat.

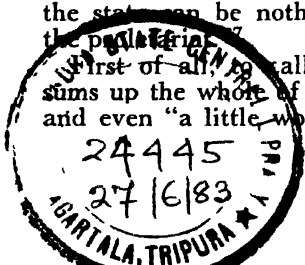
But the way in which he the "Marxist" did it was simply farcical! Listen to this:

"This view" (which Kautsky dubs "contempt for democracy") "rests upon a single word of Karl Marx's." This is what Kautsky literally says on page 20. And on page 60 the same thing is repeated even in the form that they (the Bolsheviks) "opportunistly recalled the little word" (that is literally what he says—*des Wörtchens*!!) "about the dictatorship of the proletariat which Marx once used in 1875 in a letter".

Here is Marx's "little word":

"Between capitalist and communist society lies the period of the revolutionary transformation of the one into the other. Corresponding to this is also a political transition period in which the state can be nothing but the revolutionary dictatorship of the proletariat."

First of all, to call this classical reasoning of Marx's, which sums up the whole of his revolutionary teaching, "a single word" and even "a little word", is an insult to and complete renuncia-



tion of Marxism. It must not be forgotten that Kautsky knows Marx almost by heart, and, judging by all he has written, he has in his desk, or in his head, a number of pigeon-holes in which all that was ever written by Marx is most carefully filed so as to be ready at hand for quotation. Kautsky *must know* that both Marx and Engels, in their letters as well as in their published works, *repeatedly* spoke about the dictatorship of the proletariat, before and especially after the Paris Commune. Kautsky must know that the formula "dictatorship of the proletariat" is merely a more historically concrete and scientifically exact formulation of the proletariat's task of "smashing" the bourgeois state machine, about which both Marx and Engels, in summing up the experience of the Revolution of 1848, and, still more so, of 1871, spoke *for forty years*, between 1852 and 1891.

How is this monstrous distortion of Marxism by that Marxist pedant Kautsky to be explained? As far as the philosophical roots of this phenomenon are concerned, it amounts to the substitution of eclecticism and sophistry for dialectics. Kautsky is a past master at this sort of substitution. Regarded from the point of view of practical politics, it amounts to subservience to the opportunists, that is, in the last analysis to the bourgeoisie. Since the outbreak of the war, Kautsky has made increasingly rapid progress in this art of being a Marxist in words and a lackey of the bourgeoisie in deeds, until he has become a virtuoso at it.

One feels even more convinced of this when examining the remarkable way in which Kautsky "interprets" Marx's "little word" about the dictatorship of the proletariat. Listen to this:

"Marx, unfortunately, neglected to show us in greater detail how he conceived this dictatorship..." (This is an utterly mendacious phrase of a renegade, for Marx and Engels gave us, indeed, quite a number of most detailed indications, which Kautsky, the Marxist pedant, has deliberately ignored) "Literally, the word dictatorship means the abolition of democracy. But, of course, taken literally, this word also means the undivided rule of a single person unrestricted by any laws—an autocracy, which differs from despotism only insofar as it is not meant as a permanent state institution, but as a transient emergency measure.

"The term, 'dictatorship of the proletariat', hence not the dictatorship of a single individual, but of a class, *ipso facto* precludes the possibility that Marx in this connection had in mind a dictatorship in the literal sense of the term

"He speaks here not of a *form of government*, but of a *condition*, which must necessarily arise wherever the proletariat has gained political power. That Marx in this case did not have in mind a form of government is proved by the fact that he was of the opinion that in Britain and America the transition might take place peacefully, i.e., in a democratic way" (p. 20).

We have deliberately quoted this argument in full so that the reader may clearly see the methods Kautsky the "theoretician" employs.

Kautsky chose to approach the question in such a way as to begin with a definition of the "word" dictatorship.

Very well. Everyone has a sacred right to approach a question in whatever way he pleases. One must only distinguish a serious and honest approach from a dishonest one. Anyone who wants to be serious in approaching the question in this way ought to give *his own definition* of the "word". Then the question would be put fairly and squarely. But Kautsky does not do that. "Literally," he writes, "the word dictatorship means the abolition of democracy."

In the first place, this is not a definition. If Kautsky wanted to avoid giving a definition of the concept dictatorship, why did he choose this particular approach to the question?

Secondly, it is obviously wrong. It is natural for a liberal to speak of "democracy" in general; but a Marxist will never forget to ask: "for what class?" Everyone knows, for instance (and Kautsky the "historian" knows it too), that rebellions, or even strong ferment, among the slaves in ancient times at once revealed the fact that the ancient state was essentially a *dictatorship of the slaveowners*. Did this dictatorship abolish democracy *among*, and *for*, the slaveowners? Everybody knows that it did not.

Kautsky the "Marxist" made this monstrously absurd and untrue statement because he "*forgot*" the class struggle. . . .

To transform Kautsky's liberal and false assertion into a Marxist and true one, one must say: dictatorship does not necessarily mean the abolition of democracy for the class that exercises the dictatorship over other classes; but it does mean the abolition (or very material restriction, which is also a form of abolition) of democracy for the class over which, or against which, the dictatorship is exercised.

But, however true this assertion may be, it does not give a definition of dictatorship.

Let us examine Kautsky's next sentence:

".. But, of course, taken literally, this word also means the undivided rule of a single person unrestricted by any laws. . . ."

Like a blind puppy sniffing at random first in one direction and then in another, Kautsky accidentally stumbled upon *one* true idea (namely, that dictatorship is rule unrestricted by any laws), *nevertheless*, he *failed* to give a definition of dictatorship, and, moreover, he made an obvious historical blunder, namely, that dictatorship means the rule of a single person. This is even grammatically incorrect, since dictatorship may also be exercised by a handful of persons, or by an oligarchy, or by a class, etc.

Kautsky then goes on to point out the difference between dictatorship and despotism, but, although what he says is obviously

incorrect, we shall not dwell upon it, as it is wholly irrelevant to the question that interests us. Everyone knows Kautsky's inclination to turn from the twentieth century to the eighteenth, and from the eighteenth century to classical antiquity, and we hope that the German proletariat, after it has attained its dictatorship, will bear this inclination of his in mind and appoint him, say, teacher of ancient history at some Gymnasium. To try to evade a definition of the dictatorship of the proletariat by philosophising about despotism is either crass stupidity or very clumsy trickery.

As a result, we find that, having undertaken to discuss the dictatorship, Kautsky rattled off a great deal of manifest lies, but has given no definition! Yet, instead of relying on his mental faculties he could have used his memory to extract from "pigeon-holes" all those instances in which Marx speaks of dictatorship. Had he done so, he would certainly have arrived either at the following definition or at one in substance coinciding with it:

Dictatorship is rule based directly upon force and unrestricted by any laws.

The revolutionary dictatorship of the proletariat is rule won and maintained by the use of violence by the proletariat against the bourgeoisie, rule that is unrestricted by any laws.

This simple truth, a truth that is as plain as a pikestaff to every class-conscious worker (who represents the people, and not an upper section of petty-bourgeois scoundrels who have been bribed by the capitalists, such as are the social-imperialists of all countries), this truth, which is obvious to every representative of the exploited classes fighting for their emancipation, this truth, which is beyond dispute for every Marxist, has to be "extracted by force" from the most learned Mr. Kautsky! How is it to be explained? Simply by that spirit of servility with which the leaders of the Second International, who have become contemptible sycophants in the service of the bourgeoisie, are imbued.

Kautsky first committed a sleight of hand by proclaiming the obvious nonsense that the word dictatorship, in its literal sense, means the dictatorship of a single person, and then—on the strength of this sleight of hand—he declared that "hence" Marx's words about the dictatorship of a class were *not* meant in the literal sense (but in one in which dictatorship does not imply revolutionary violence, but the "peaceful" winning of a majority under bourgeois—mark you—"democracy").

One must, if you please, distinguish between a "condition" and a "form of government". A wonderfully profound distinction; it is like drawing a distinction between the "condition" of stupidity of a man who reasons foolishly and the "form" of his stupidity.

Kautsky *finds it necessary* to interpret dictatorship as a "condition of domination" (this is the literal expression he uses on the very next page, p. 21), because then *revolutionary violence, and violent revolution, disappear*. The "condition of domination" is a condition in which any majority finds itself under ... "democracy"! Thanks to such a fraud, *revolution happily disappears!*

The fraud, however, is too crude and will not save Kautsky. One cannot hide the fact that dictatorship presupposes and implies a "condition", one so disagreeable to renegades, of *revolutionary violence* of one class against another. It is patently absurd to draw a distinction between a "condition" and a "form of government". To speak of forms of government in this connection is trebly stupid, for every schoolboy knows that monarchy and republic are two different forms of government. It must be explained to Mr. Kautsky that *both* these forms of government, like all transitional "forms of government" under capitalism, are only variations of the *bourgeois state*, that is, of the *dictatorship of the bourgeoisie*.

Lastly, to speak of forms of government is not only a stupid, but also a very crude falsification of Marx, who was very clearly speaking here of this or that form or type of *state*, and not of forms of government.

The proletarian revolution is impossible without the forcible destruction of the bourgeois state machine and the substitution for it of a *new one* which, in the words of Engels, is "no longer a state in the proper sense of the word".<sup>8</sup>

Because of his renegade position, Kautsky, however, has to befog and belie all this.

Look what wretched subterfuges he uses.

First subterfuge. "That Marx in this case did not have in mind a form of government is proved by the fact that he was of the opinion that in Britain and America the transition might take place peacefully, i.e., in a democratic way."

The *form of government* has absolutely nothing to do with it, for there are monarchies which are not typical of the *bourgeois state*, such, for instance, as have no military clique, and there are republics which are quite typical in this respect, such, for instance, as have a military clique and a bureaucracy. This is a universally known historical and political fact, and Kautsky cannot falsify it.

If Kautsky had wanted to argue in a serious and honest manner he would have asked himself: Are there historical laws relating to revolution which know of no exception? And the reply would have been: No, there are no such laws. Such laws only apply to the typical, to what Marx once termed the "ideal", meaning average, normal, typical capitalism.

Further, was there in the seventies anything which made England and America exceptional *in regard to what we are now discussing*? It will be obvious to anyone at all familiar with the requirements of science in regard to the problems of history that this question must be put. To fail to put it is tantamount to falsifying science, to engaging in sophistry. And, the question having been put, there can be no doubt as to the reply: the revolutionary dictatorship of the proletariat is *violence* against the bourgeoisie; and the necessity of such violence is *particularly* called for, as Marx and Engels have repeatedly explained in detail (especially in *The Civil War in France* and in the preface to it), by the existence of *militarism and a bureaucracy*. But it is precisely these institutions that were *non-existent* in Britain and America in the seventies, when Marx made his observations (they *do* exist in Britain and in America *now*)!

Kautsky has to resort to trickery literally at every step to cover up his apostasy!

And note how he inadvertently betrayed his cloven hoof when he wrote: "peacefully, *i.e., in a democratic way*"!

In defining dictatorship, Kautsky tried his utmost to conceal from the reader the fundamental feature of this concept, namely, revolutionary violence. But now the truth is out: it is a question of the contrast between *peaceful* and *violent revolutions*.

That is the crux of the matter. Kautsky has to resort to all these subtleties, sophistries and falsifications only to *excuse* himself from *violent* revolution, and to conceal his renunciation of it, his desertion to the side of the *liberal* labour policy, *i.e., to the side of the bourgeoisie*. That is the crux of the matter.

Kautsky the "historian" so shamelessly falsifies history that he "forgets" the fundamental fact that pre-monopoly capitalism—which actually reached its zenith in the seventies—was by virtue of its fundamental *economic* traits, which found most typical expression in Britain and in America, distinguished by a, relatively speaking, maximum fondness for peace and freedom. Imperialism, on the other hand, *i.e., monopoly capitalism*, which finally matured only in the twentieth century, is, by virtue of its fundamental *economic* traits, distinguished by a minimum fondness for peace and freedom, and by a maximum and universal development of militarism. To "fail to notice" this in discussing the extent to which a peaceful or violent revolution is typical or probable is to stoop to the level of a most ordinary lackey of the bourgeoisie.

Second subterfuge. The Paris Commune was a dictatorship of the proletariat, but it was elected by *universal* suffrage, *i.e., without depriving the bourgeoisie of the franchise, i.e., "democratically"*. And Kautsky says triumphantly: "...The dictatorship



of the proletariat was for Marx" (or: according to Marx) "a condition which necessarily follows from pure democracy, if the proletariat forms the majority" (*bei überwiegendem Proletariat*, S. 21).

This argument of Kautsky's is so amusing that one truly suffers from a veritable *embarras de richesses* (an embarrassment due to the wealth... of objections that can be made to it). Firstly, it is well known that the flower, the General Staff, the upper sections of the bourgeoisie, had fled from Paris to Versailles. In Versailles there was the "socialist" Louis Blanc—which, by the way, proves the falsity of Kautsky's assertion that "all trends" of socialism took part in the Paris Commune. Is it not ridiculous to represent the division of the inhabitants of Paris into two belligerent camps, one of which embraced the entire militant and politically active section of the bourgeoisie, as "pure democracy" with "universal suffrage"?

Secondly, the Paris Commune waged war against Versailles as the workers' government of *France* against the bourgeois government. What have "pure democracy" and "universal suffrage" to do with it, when Paris was deciding the fate of France? When Marx expressed the opinion that the Paris Commune had committed a mistake in failing to seize the bank, which belonged to the whole of France,<sup>9</sup> did he not proceed from the principles and practice of "pure democracy"?

In actual fact, it is obvious that Kautsky is writing in a country where the police forbid people to laugh "in crowds", otherwise Kautsky would have been killed by ridicule.

Thirdly, I would respectfully remind Mr. Kautsky, who has Marx and Engels off pat, of the following appraisal of the Paris Commune given by Engels from the point of view of... "pure democracy":

"Have these gentlemen" (the anti-authoritarians) "ever seen a revolution? A revolution is certainly the most authoritarian thing there is: it is an act whereby one part of the population imposes its will upon the other by means of rifles, bayonets and cannon—all of which are highly authoritarian means. And the victorious party must maintain its rule by means of the terror which its arms inspire in the reactionaries. Would the Paris Commune have lasted more than a day if it had not used the authority of the armed people against the bourgeoisie? Cannot we, on the contrary, blame it for having made too little use of that authority?"<sup>10</sup>

Here is your "pure democracy"! How Engels would have ridiculed the vulgar petty bourgeois, the "Social-Democrat" (in the French sense of the forties and the general European sense of 1914-18), who took it into his head to talk about "pure democracy" in a class-divided society!

But that's enough. It is impossible to enumerate all Kautsky's various absurdities, since every phrase he utters is a bottomless pit of apostasy.

Marx and Engels analysed the Paris Commune in a most detailed manner and showed that its merit lay in its attempt to *smash, to break up* the "ready-made state machinery"<sup>11</sup>. Marx and Engels considered this conclusion to be so important that this was the *only* amendment they introduced in 1872 into the "obsolete" (in parts) programme of the *Communist Manifesto*<sup>12</sup>. Marx and Engels showed that the Paris Commune had abolished the army and the bureaucracy, had abolished *parliamentarism*, had destroyed "that parasitic excrescence, the state", etc. But the sage Kautsky, donning his nightcap, repeats the fairy-tale about "pure democracy", which has been told a thousand times by liberal professors.

No wonder Rosa Luxemburg declared, on August 4, 1914, that German Social-Democracy was a *stinking corpse*.<sup>13</sup>

Third subterfuge. "When we speak of the dictatorship as a form of government we cannot speak of the dictatorship of a class, since a class, as we have already pointed out, can only rule but not govern. . . ." It is "organisations" or "parties" that govern.

That is a muddle, a disgusting muddle, Mr. "Muddleheaded Counsellor"! Dictatorship is not a "form of government"; that is ridiculous nonsense. And Marx does not speak of the "form of government" but of the form or type of *state*. That is something altogether different, entirely different. It is altogether wrong, too, to say that a *class* cannot govern: such an absurdity could only have been uttered by a "parliamentary cretin", who sees nothing but bourgeois parliaments and notices nothing but "ruling parties". Any European country will provide Kautsky with examples of government by a ruling *class*, for instance, by the landowners in the Middle Ages, in spite of their insufficient organisation.

To sum up: Kautsky has in a most unparalleled manner distorted the concept dictatorship of the proletariat, and has turned Marx into a common liberal; that is, he himself has sunk to the level of a liberal who utters banal phrases about "pure democracy", embellishing and glossing over the class content of *bourgeois* democracy, and shrinking, above all, from the use of *revolutionary violence* by the oppressed class. By so "interpreting" the concept "revolutionary dictatorship of the proletariat" as to expunge the revolutionary violence of the oppressed class against its oppressors, Kautsky has beaten the world record in the liberal distortion of Marx. The renegade Bernstein has proved to be a mere puppy compared with the renegade Kautsky.

## BOURGEOIS AND PROLETARIAN DEMOCRACY

The question which Kautsky has so shamelessly muddled really stands as follows.

If we are not to mock at common sense and history, it is obvious that we cannot speak of "pure democracy" as long as different *classes* exist; we can only speak of *class* democracy. (Let us say in parenthesis that "pure democracy" is not only an *ignorant* phrase, revealing a lack of understanding both of the class struggle and of the nature of the state, but also a thrice-empty phrase, since in communist society democracy will *with*er away in the process of changing and becoming a habit, but will never be "pure" democracy.)

"Pure democracy" is the mendacious phrase of a liberal who wants to fool the workers. History knows of bourgeois democracy which takes the place of feudalism, and of proletarian democracy which takes the place of bourgeois democracy.

When Kautsky devotes dozens of pages to "proving" the truth that bourgeois democracy is progressive compared with medievalism, and that the proletariat must unfailingly utilise it in its struggle against the bourgeoisie, that in fact is just liberal twaddle intended to fool the workers. This is a truism, not only for educated Germany, but also for uneducated Russia. Kautsky is simply throwing "learned" dust in the eyes of the workers when, with a pompous mien, he talks about Weitling and the Jesuits of Paraguay and many other things, *in order to avoid* telling about the *bourgeois* essence of modern, i.e., *capitalist*, democracy.

Kautsky takes from Marxism what is acceptable to the liberals, to the bourgeoisie (the criticism of the Middle Ages, and the progressive historical role of capitalism in general and of capitalist democracy in particular), and discards, passes over in silence, glosses over all that in Marxism which is *unacceptable* to the bourgeoisie (the revolutionary violence of the proletariat against the bourgeoisie for the latter's destruction). That is why Kautsky, by virtue of his objective position and irrespective of what his subjective convictions may be, inevitably proves to be a lackey of the bourgeoisie.

Bourgeois democracy, although a great historical advance in comparison with medievalism, always remains, and under capitalism is bound to remain, restricted, truncated, false and hypocritical, a paradise for the rich and a snare and deception for the exploited, for the poor. It is this truth, which forms a most essential part of Marx's teaching, that Kautsky the "Marxist" has failed to understand. On this—the fundamental issue—Kautsky offers "delights" for the bourgeoisie instead of a scientific

criticism of those conditions which make every bourgeois democracy a democracy for the rich.

Let us first remind the most learned Mr. Kautsky of the theoretical propositions of Marx and Engels which that pedant has so disgracefully "forgotten" (to please the bourgeoisie), and then explain the matter as popularly as possible.

Not only the ancient and feudal, but also "the modern representative state is an instrument of exploitation of wage-labour by capital" (Engels, in his work on the state)<sup>14</sup> "As, therefore, the state is only a transitional institution which is used in the struggle, in the revolution, to hold down one's adversaries by force, it is sheer nonsense to talk of a 'free people's state'; so long as the proletariat still needs the state, it does not need it in the interests of freedom but in order to hold down its adversaries, and as soon as it becomes possible to speak of freedom the state as such ceases to exist" (Engels, in his letter to Bebel, March 28, 1875). "In reality, however, the state is nothing but a machine for the oppression of one class by another, and indeed in the democratic republic no less than in the monarchy" (Engels, Introduction to *The Civil War in France* by Marx). Universal suffrage is "the gauge of the maturity of the working class. *It cannot and never will be anything more in the present-day state*". (Engels, in his work on the state. Mr. Kautsky very tediously chews over the cud in the first part of this proposition, which is acceptable to the bourgeoisie. But the second part, which we have italicised and which is not acceptable to the bourgeoisie, the renegade Kautsky passes over in silence!) "The Commune was to be a working, not a parliamentary, body, executive and legislative at the same time. . . . Instead of deciding once in three or six years which member of the ruling class was to represent and suppress (*ver- und zertreten*) the people in Parliament, universal suffrage was to serve the people, constituted in Communes, as individual suffrage serves every other employer in the search for workers, foremen and accountants for his business" (Marx, in his work on the Paris Commune, *The Civil War in France*).

Every one of these propositions, which are excellently known to the most learned Mr. Kautsky, is a slap in his face and lays bare his apostasy. Nowhere in his pamphlet does Kautsky reveal the slightest understanding of these truths. His whole pamphlet is a sheer mockery of Marxism!

Take the fundamental laws of modern states, take their administration, take freedom of assembly, freedom of the press, or "equality of all citizens before the law", and you will see at every turn evidence of the hypocrisy of bourgeois democracy with which every honest and class-conscious worker is familiar. There is not a single state, however democratic, which has no loopholes or

reservations in its constitution guaranteeing the bourgeoisie the possibility of dispatching troops against the workers, of proclaiming martial law, and so forth. in case of a "violation of public order", and actually in case the exploited class "violates" its position of slavery and tries to behave in a non-slavish manner. Kautsky shamelessly embellishes bourgeois democracy and omits to mention, for instance, how the most democratic and republican bourgeoisie in America or Switzerland deal with workers on strike.

The wise and learned Kautsky keeps silent about these things! That learned politician does not realise that to remain silent on this matter is despicable. He prefers to tell the workers nursery tales of the kind that democracy means "protecting the minority". It is incredible, but it is a fact! In the year of our Lord 1918, in the fifth year of the world imperialist slaughter and the strangulation of internationalist minorities (i.e., those who have not despicably betrayed socialism, like the Renaudels and Longuets, the Scheidemanns and Kautskys, the Hendersons and Webbs et al.) in all "democracies" of the world, the learned Mr. Kautsky sweetly, very sweetly, sings the praises of "protection of the minority". Those who are interested may read this on page 15 of Kautsky's pamphlet. And on page 16 this learned ... individual tells you about the Whigs and Tories<sup>45</sup> in England in the eighteenth century!

What wonderful erudition! What refined servility to the bourgeoisie! What civilised belly-crawling before the capitalists and boot-licking! If I were Krupp or Scheidemann, or Clemenceau or Renaudel, I would pay Mr. Kautsky millions, reward him with Judas kisses, praise him before the workers and urge "socialist unity" with "honourable" men like him. To write pamphlets against the dictatorship of the proletariat, to talk about the Whigs and Tories in England in the eighteenth century, to assert that democracy means "protecting the minority", and remain silent about pogroms against internationalists in the "democratic" republic of America—isn't this rendering lackey service to the bourgeoisie?

The learned Mr. Kautsky has "forgotten"—accidentally forgotten, probably—a "trifle", namely, that the ruling party in a bourgeois democracy extends the protection of the minority only to another bourgeois party, while the proletariat, on all *serious, profound and fundamental* issues, gets martial law or pogroms, instead of the "protection of the minority". *The more highly developed a democracy is, the more imminent are pogroms or civil war in connection with any profound political divergence which is dangerous to the bourgeoisie.* The learned Mr. Kautsky could have studied this "law" of bourgeois democracy in connection

with the Dreyfus case<sup>16</sup> in republican France, with the lynching of Negroes and internationalists in the democratic republic of America, with the case of Ireland and Ulster in democratic Britain,<sup>17</sup> with the baiting of the Bolsheviks and the staging of pogroms against them in April 1917 in the democratic republic of Russia. I have purposely chosen examples not only from wartime but also from pre-war time, peacetime. But mealy-mouthed Mr. Kautsky prefers to shut his eyes to these facts of the twentieth century, and instead to tell the workers wonderfully new, remarkably interesting, unusually edifying and incredibly important things about the Whigs and Tories of the eighteenth century!

Take the bourgeois parliament. Can it be that the learned Kautsky has never heard that the *more highly* democracy is developed, the *more* the bourgeois parliaments are subjected by the stock exchange and the bankers? This does not mean that we must not make use of bourgeois parliament (the Bolsheviks made better use of it than probably any other party in the world, for in 1912-14 we won the entire workers' curia in the Fourth Duma).<sup>18</sup> But it does mean that only a liberal can forget the *historical limitations and conventional nature* of the bourgeois parliamentary system as Kautsky does. Even in the most democratic bourgeois state the oppressed people at every step encounter the crying contradiction between the *formal* equality proclaimed by the "democracy" of the capitalists and the thousands of *real* limitations and subterfuges which turn the proletarians into *wage-slaves*. It is precisely this contradiction that is opening the eyes of the people to the rottenness, mendacity and hypocrisy of capitalism. It is this contradiction that the agitators and propagandists of socialism are constantly exposing to the people, *in order to prepare* them for revolution! And now that the era of revolution *has begun*, Kautsky turns his back upon it and begins to extol the charms of *moribund* bourgeois democracy.

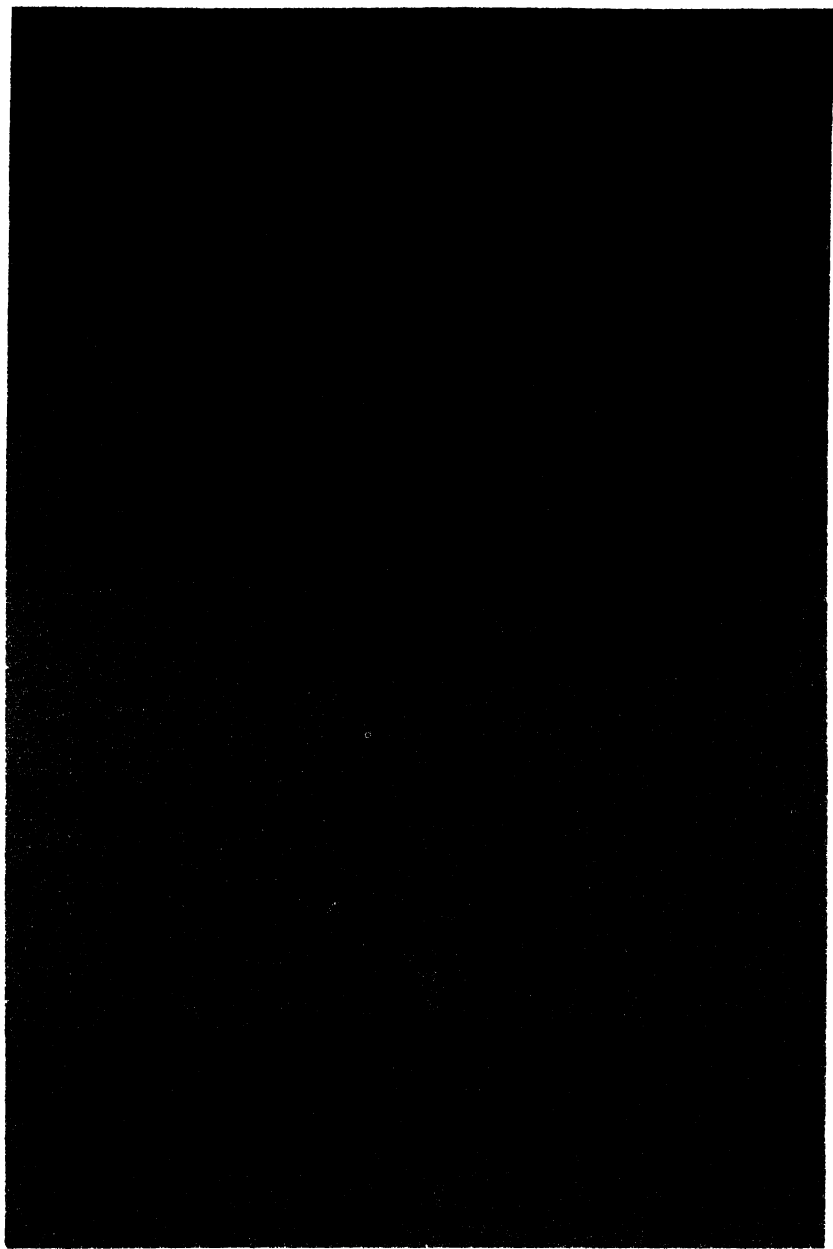
Proletarian democracy, of which Soviet government is one of the forms, has brought a development and expansion of democracy unprecedented in the world, for the vast majority of the population, for the exploited and working people. To write a whole pamphlet about democracy, as Kautsky did, in which two pages are devoted to dictatorship and dozens to "pure democracy", and *fail to notice* this fact, means completely distorting the subject in liberal fashion.

Take foreign policy. In no bourgeois state, not even in the most democratic, is it conducted openly. The people are deceived everywhere, and in democratic France, Switzerland, America and Britain this is done on an incomparably wider scale and in an incomparably subtler manner than in other countries. The Soviet government has torn the veil of mystery from foreign

policy in a revolutionary manner. Kautsky has not noticed this, he keeps silent about it, although in the era of predatory wars and secret treaties for the "division of spheres of influence" (i.e., for the partition of the world among the capitalist bandits) this is of *cardinal* importance, for on it depends the question of peace, the life and death of tens of millions of people.

Take the structure of the state. Kautsky picks at all manner of "trifles", down to the argument that under the Soviet Constitution elections are "indirect", but he misses the point. He fails to see the *class* nature of the state apparatus, of the machinery of state. Under bourgeois democracy the capitalists, by thousands of tricks—which are the more artful and effective the more "pure" democracy is developed—*drive* the people away from administrative work, from freedom of the press, freedom of assembly, etc. The Soviet government is the *first* in the world (or strictly speaking, the second, because the Paris Commune began to do the same thing) to *enlist* the people, specifically the *exploited* people, in the work of administration. The working people are *barred* from participation in bourgeois parliaments (they *never decide* important questions under bourgeois democracy, which are decided by the stock exchange and the banks) by thousands of obstacles, and the workers know and feel, see and realise perfectly well that the bourgeois parliaments are institutions *alien* to them, *instruments for the oppression* of the workers by the bourgeoisie, institutions of a hostile class, of the exploiting minority.

The Soviets are the direct organisation of the working and exploited people themselves, which *helps* them to organise and administer their own state in every possible way. And in this it is the vanguard of the working and exploited people, the urban proletariat, that enjoys the advantage of being best united by the large enterprises; it is easier for it than for all others to elect and exercise control over those elected. The Soviet form of organisation automatically *helps* to unite all the working and exploited people around their vanguard, the proletariat. The old bourgeois apparatus—the bureaucracy, the privileges of wealth, of bourgeois education, of social connections, etc. (these real privileges are the more varied the more highly bourgeois democracy is developed)—all this disappears under the Soviet form of organisation. Freedom of the press ceases to be hypocrisy, because the printing-plants and stocks of paper are taken away from the bourgeoisie. The same thing applies to the best buildings, the palaces, the mansions and manor houses. Soviet power took thousands upon thousands of these best buildings from the exploiters at one stroke, and in this way made the right of assembly—without which democracy is a fraud—a *million times*



'Cover of the pamphlet  
*The Proletarian Revolution and the Renegade Kautsky*  
with Lenin's remarks 1918  
*Reduced*





more democratic for the people. Indirect elections to non-local Soviets make it easier to hold congresses of Soviets, they make the *entire* apparatus less costly, more flexible, more accessible to the workers and peasants at a time when life is seething and it is necessary to be able very quickly to recall one's local deputy or to delegate him to a general congress of Soviets.

Proletarian democracy is a *million times* more democratic than any bourgeois democracy; Soviet power is a million times more democratic than the most democratic bourgeois republic.

To fail to see this one must either deliberately serve the bourgeoisie, or be politically as dead as a doornail, unable to see real life from behind the dusty pages of bourgeois books, be thoroughly imbued with bourgeois-democratic prejudices, and thereby objectively convert oneself into a lackey of the bourgeoisie.

To fail to see this one must be incapable of *presenting the question* from the point of view of the *oppressed* classes:

Is there a single country in the world, even among the most democratic bourgeois countries, in which the *average rank-and-file* worker, the average rank-and-file *farm labourer*, or village semi-proletarian generally (i.e., the representative of the oppressed, of the overwhelming majority of the population), enjoys anything approaching such *liberty* of holding meetings in the best buildings, such *liberty* of using the largest printing-plants and biggest stocks of paper to express his ideas and to defend his interests, such *liberty* of promoting men and women of his own class to administer and to "knock into shape" the state, as in Soviet Russia?

It is ridiculous to think that Mr. Kautsky could find in any country even one out of a thousand of well-informed workers or farm labourers who would have any doubts as to the reply. Instinctively, from hearing fragments of admissions of the truth in the bourgeois press, the workers of the whole world sympathise with the Soviet Republic precisely because they regard it as a *proletarian* democracy, a *democracy for the poor*, and not a democracy for the rich that every bourgeois democracy, even the best, actually is.

We are governed (and our state is "knocked into shape") by bourgeois bureaucrats, by bourgeois members of parliament, by bourgeois judges—such is the simple, obvious and indisputable truth which tens and hundreds of millions of people belonging to the oppressed classes in all bourgeois countries, including the most democratic, know from their own experience, feel and realise every day.

In Russia, however, the bureaucratic machine has been completely smashed, razed to the ground; the old judges have all been sent packing, the bourgeois parliament has been dispersed

—and *far more accessible* representation has been given to the workers and peasants; *their* Soviets have replaced the bureaucrats, or *their* Soviets have been put in control of the bureaucrats, and *their* Soviets have been authorised to elect the judges. This fact alone is enough for all the oppressed classes to recognise that Soviet power, i.e., the present form of the dictatorship of the proletariat, is a million times more democratic than the most democratic bourgeois republic.

Kautsky does not understand this truth, which is so clear and obvious to every worker, because he has “forgotten”, “unlearned” to put the question: democracy *for which class*? He argues from the point of view of “pure” (i.e., non-class? or above-class?) democracy. He argues like Shylock: my “pound of flesh” and nothing else.<sup>19</sup> Equality for all citizens—otherwise there is no democracy.

We must ask the learned Kautsky, the “Marxist” and “socialist” Kautsky:

Can there be equality between the exploited and the exploiters?

It is dreadful, it is incredible that such a question should have to be put in discussing a book written by the ideological leader of the Second International. But “having put your hand to the plough, don’t look back”, and having undertaken to write about Kautsky, I must explain to the learned man why there can be no equality between the exploiter and the exploited.

## CAN THERE BE EQUALITY BETWEEN THE EXPLOITED AND THE EXPLOITER?

Kautsky argues as follows:

(1) “The exploiters have always formed only a small minority of the population” (p. 14 of Kautsky’s pamphlet).

This is indisputably true. Taking this as the starting-point, what should be the argument? One may argue in a Marxist, a socialist way. In which case one would proceed from the relation between the exploited and the exploiters. Or one may argue in a liberal, a bourgeois-democratic way. And in that case one would proceed from the relation, between the majority and the minority.

If we argue in a Marxist way, we must say: the exploiters inevitably transform the state (and we are speaking of democracy, i.e., one of the forms of the state) into an instrument of the rule of their class, the exploiters, over the exploited. Hence, as long as there are exploiters who rule the majority, the exploit-

ed, the democratic state must inevitably be a democracy for the exploiters. A state of the exploited must fundamentally differ from such a state; it must be a democracy for the exploited, and a means of *suppressing the exploiters*; and the suppression of a class means inequality for that class, its exclusion from "democracy".

If we argue in a liberal way, we must say: the majority decides, the minority submits. Those who do not submit are punished. That is all. Nothing need be said about the class character of the state in general, or of "pure democracy" in particular, because it is irrelevant; for a majority is a majority and a minority is a minority. A pound of flesh is a pound of flesh, and that is all there is to it.

And this is exactly how Kautsky argues.

(2) "Why should the rule of the proletariat assume, and necessarily assume, a form which is incompatible with democracy?" (P. 21.) Then follows a very detailed and a very verbose explanation, backed by a quotation from Marx and the election figures of the Paris Commune, to the effect that the proletariat is in the majority. The conclusion is: "A regime which is so strongly rooted in the people has not the slightest reason for encroaching upon democracy. It cannot always dispense with violence in cases when violence is employed to suppress democracy. Violence can only be met with violence. But a regime which knows that it has popular backing will employ violence only to *protect* democracy and not to *destroy* it. It would be simply suicidal if it attempted to do away with its most reliable basis—universal suffrage, that deep source of mighty moral authority" (p. 22).

As you see, the relation between the exploited and the exploiters has vanished in Kautsky's argument. All that remains is majority in general, minority in general, democracy in general, the "pure democracy" with which we are already familiar.

And all this, mark you, is said *à propos of the Paris Commune*! To make things clearer I shall quote Marx and Engels to show what they said on the subject of dictatorship *à propos of the Paris Commune*:

*Marx*: "... When the workers replace the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie by their revolutionary dictatorship ... to break down the resistance of the bourgeoisie ... the workers invest the state with a revolutionary and transitional form. ..."20

*Engels*: "... And the victorious party" (in a revolution) "must maintain its rule by means of the terror which its arms inspire in the reactionaries. Would the Paris Commune have lasted more than a day if it had not used the authority of the armed people against the bourgeoisie? Cannot we, on the contrary, blame it for having made too little use of that authority?..."21

*Engels*: "As, therefore, the state is only a transitional institution which is used in the struggle, in the revolution, to hold down one's adversaries by force, it is sheer nonsense to talk of a 'free people's state'; so long as the proletariat still needs the state, it does not need it in the interests of freedom but in order to hold down its adversaries, and as soon as it becomes possible to speak of freedom the state as such ceases to exist..."<sup>22</sup>

Kautsky is as far removed from Marx and Engels as heaven is from earth, as a liberal from a proletarian revolutionary. The pure democracy and simple "democracy" that Kautsky talks about is merely a paraphrase of the "free people's state", i.e., *sheer nonsense*. Kautsky, with the learned air of a most learned arm-chair fool, or with the innocent air of a ten-year-old schoolgirl, asks: Why do we need a dictatorship when we have a majority? And Marx and Engels explain:

- to break down the resistance of the bourgeoisie;
- to inspire the reactionaries with fear;
- to maintain the authority of the armed people against the bourgeoisie;
- that the proletariat may forcibly hold down its adversaries.

Kautsky does not understand these explanations. Infatuated with the "purity" of democracy, blind to its bourgeois character, he "consistently" urges that the majority, since it is the majority, need not "break down the resistance" of the minority, nor "forcibly hold it down"—it is sufficient to suppress *cases* of infringement of democracy. Infatuated with the "purity" of democracy, Kautsky *inadvertently* commits the same little error that all bourgeois democrats always commit, namely, he takes formal equality (which is nothing but a fraud and hypocrisy under capitalism) for actual equality! Quite a trifle!

The exploiter and the exploited cannot be equal.

This truth, however unpleasant it may be to Kautsky, nevertheless forms the essence of socialism.

Another truth: there can be no real, actual equality until all possibility of the exploitation of one class by another has been totally destroyed.

The exploiters can be defeated at one stroke in the event of a successful uprising at the centre, or of a revolt in the army. But except in very rare and special cases, the exploiters cannot be destroyed at one stroke. It is impossible to expropriate all the landowners and capitalists of any big country at one stroke. Furthermore, expropriation alone, as a legal or political act, does not settle the matter by a long chalk, because it is necessary to *depose* the landowners and capitalists in actual fact, to *replace* their management of the factories and estates by a different management, workers' management, in actual fact. There

can be no equality between the exploiters—who for many generations have been better off because of their education, conditions of wealthy life, and habits—and the exploited, the majority of whom even in the most advanced and most democratic bourgeois republics are downtrodden, backward, ignorant, intimidated and disunited. For a long time after the revolution the exploiters inevitably continue to retain a number of great practical advantages: they still have money (since it is impossible to abolish money all at once); some movable property—often fairly considerable; they still have various connections, habits of organisation and management; knowledge of all the “secrets” (customs, methods, means and possibilities) of management; superior education; close connections with the higher technical personnel (who live and think like the bourgeoisie); incomparably greater experience in the art of war (this is very important), and so on and so forth.

If the exploiters are defeated in one country only—and this, of course, is typical, since a simultaneous revolution in a number of countries is a rare exception—they *still* remain *stronger* than the exploited, for the international connections of the exploiters are enormous. That a section of the exploited from the least advanced middle-peasant, artisan and similar groups of the population may, and indeed does, follow the exploiters has been proved by *all* revolutions, including the Commune (for there were also proletarians among the Versailles troops, which the most learned Kautsky has “forgotten”).

In these circumstances, to assume that in a revolution which is at all profound and serious the issue is decided simply by the relation between the majority and the minority is the acme of stupidity, the silliest prejudice of a common liberal, an attempt to *deceive the people* by concealing from them a well-established historical truth. This historical truth is that in every profound revolution, the *prolonged, stubborn and desperate* resistance of the exploiters, who for a number of years retain important practical advantages over the exploited, is the *rule*. Never—except in the sentimental fantasies of the sentimental fool Kautsky—will the exploiters submit to the decision of the exploited majority without trying to make use of their advantages in a last desperate battle, or series of battles.

The transition from capitalism to communism takes an entire historical epoch. Until this epoch is over, the exploiters inevitably cherish the hope of restoration, and this *hope* turns into *attempts* at restoration. After their first serious defeat, the overthrown exploiters—who had not expected their overthrow, never believed it possible, never conceded the thought of it—throw themselves with energy grown tenfold, with furious passion

and hatred grown a hundredfold, into the battle for the recovery of the "paradise", of which they were deprived, on behalf of their families, who had been leading such a sweet and easy life and whom now the "common herd" is condemning to ruin and destitution (or to "common" labour...). In the train of the capitalist exploiters follow the wide sections of the petty bourgeoisie, with regard to whom decades of historical experience of all countries testify that they vacillate and hesitate, one day marching behind the proletariat and the next day taking fright at the difficulties of the revolution; that they become panic-stricken at the first defeat or semi-defeat of the workers, grow nervous, run about aimlessly, snivel, and rush from one camp into the other—just like our Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries.

In these circumstances, in an epoch of desperately acute war, when history presents the question of whether age-old and thousand-year-old privileges are to be or not to be—at such a time to talk about majority and minority, about pure democracy, about dictatorship being unnecessary and about equality between the exploiter and the exploited! What infinite stupidity and abysmal philistinism are needed for this!

However, during the decades of comparatively "peaceful" capitalism between 1871 and 1914, the Augean stables<sup>23</sup> of philistinism, imbecility, and apostasy accumulated in the socialist parties which were adapting themselves to opportunism...

\* \* \*

The reader will probably have noticed that Kautsky, in the passage from his pamphlet quoted above, speaks of an attempt to encroach upon universal suffrage (calling it, by the way, a deep source of mighty moral authority, whereas Engels, apropos of the same Paris Commune and the same question of dictatorship, spoke of the authority of the armed people against the bourgeoisie—a very characteristic difference between the philistine's and the revolutionary's views on "authority"...).

It should be observed that the question of depriving the exploiters of the franchise is a *purely Russian* question, and not a question of the dictatorship of the proletariat in general. Had Kautsky, casting aside hypocrisy, entitled his pamphlet *Against the Bolsheviks*, the title would have corresponded to the contents of the pamphlet, and Kautsky would have been justified in speaking bluntly about the franchise. But Kautsky wanted to come out primarily as a "theoretician". He called his pamphlet *The Dictatorship of the Proletariat—in general*. He speaks about the Soviets and about Russia specifically only in the second part of the pamphlet, beginning with the sixth paragraph. The subject

dealt with in the first part (from which I took the quotation) is *democracy and dictatorship in general*. In speaking about the franchise, Kautsky *betrayed himself* as an opponent of the Bolsheviks, *who does not care a brass farthing for theory*. For theory, i.e., the reasoning about the general (and not the nationally specific) class foundations of democracy and dictatorship, ought to deal not with a special question, such as the franchise, but with the general question of whether democracy can be *preserved for the rich, for the exploiters* in the historical period of the overthrow of the exploiters and the replacement of their state by the state of the exploited.

That is the way, the only way, a theoretician can present the question.

We know the example of the Paris Commune, we know all that was said by the founders of Marxism in connection with it and in reference to it. On the basis of this material I examined, for instance, the question of democracy and dictatorship in my pamphlet, *The State and Revolution*, written before the October Revolution. *I did not say anything at all* about restricting the franchise. And it must be said now that the question of restricting the franchise is a nationally specific and not a general question of the dictatorship. One must approach the question of restricting the franchise by studying the *specific conditions* of the Russian revolution and the *specific path* of its development. This will be done later on in this pamphlet. It would be a mistake, however, to guarantee in advance that the impending proletarian revolutions in Europe will all, or the majority of them, be necessarily accompanied by restriction of the franchise for the bourgeoisie. It may be so. After the war and the experience of the Russian revolution it probably will be so; but it is *not absolutely necessary* for the exercise of the dictatorship, it is not an *indispensable* characteristic of the logical concept "dictatorship", it does not enter as an *indispensable* condition in the historical and class concept "dictatorship".

The indispensable characteristic, the necessary condition of dictatorship is the *forcible*, suppression of the exploiters as a *class*, and, consequently, the *infringement* of "pure democracy", i.e., of equality and freedom, *in regard to that class*.

This is the way, the only way, the question can be put theoretically. And by failing to put the question thus, Kautsky has shown that he opposes the Bolsheviks not as a theoretician, but as a sycophant of the opportunists and the bourgeoisie.

In which countries, and given what national features of capitalism, democracy for the exploiters will be in one or another form restricted (wholly or in part), infringed upon, is a question of the specific national features of this or that capitalism, of this



or that revolution. The theoretical question is different: Is the dictatorship of the proletariat possible *without infringing democracy* in relation to the *exploiting class*?

It is precisely this question, the *only* theoretically important and essential one, that Kautsky has evaded. He has quoted all sorts of passages from Marx and Engels, *except those* which bear on this question, and which I quoted above.

Kautsky talks about anything you like, about everything that is acceptable to liberals and bourgeois democrats and does not go beyond their circle of ideas, but he does not talk about the main thing, namely, the fact that the proletariat cannot achieve victory *without breaking the resistance* of the bourgeoisie, *without forcibly suppressing its adversaries*, and that, where there is "forcible suppression", where there is no "freedom", *there is, of course, no democracy*.

This Kautsky has not understood.

\* \* \*

We shall now examine the experience of the Russian revolution and that divergence between the Soviets of Deputies and the Constituent Assembly<sup>24</sup> which led to the dissolution of the latter and to the withdrawal of the franchise from the bourgeoisie.

## THE SOVIETS DARE NOT BECOME STATE ORGANISATIONS

The Soviets are the Russian form of the proletarian dictatorship. If a Marxist theoretician, writing a work on the dictatorship of the proletariat, had really studied the subject (and not merely repeated the petty-bourgeois lamentations against dictatorship, as Kautsky did, singing to Menshevik tunes), he would first have given a general definition of dictatorship, and would then have examined its peculiar, national, form, the Soviets; he would have given his critique of them as one of the forms of the dictatorship of the proletariat.

It goes without saying that nothing serious could be expected from Kautsky after his liberalistic "interpretation" of Marx's teaching on dictatorship; but the manner in which he approached the question of what the Soviets are and the way he dealt with this question is highly characteristic.

The Soviets, he says, recalling their rise in 1905, created "the most all-embracing (*umfassendste*) form of proletarian organisation, for it embraced all the wage-workers" (p. 31). In 1905 they were only local bodies; in 1917 they became a national organisation.

"The Soviet form of organisation," Kautsky continues, "already has a great and glorious history behind it, and it has a still mightier future before it, and not in Russia alone. It appears that everywhere the old methods of the economic and political struggle of the proletariat are inadequate" (*versagen*; this German expression is somewhat stronger than "inadequate" and somewhat weaker than "impotent") "against the gigantic economic and political forces which finance capital has at its disposal. These old methods cannot be discarded; they are still indispensable for normal times; but from time to time tasks arise which they cannot cope with, tasks that can be accomplished successfully only as a result of a combination of all the political and economic instruments of force of the working class" (p. 32).

Then follows a reasoning on the mass strike and on "trade union bureaucracy"—which is no less necessary than the trade unions—being "useless for the purpose of directing the mighty mass battles that are more and more becoming a sign of the times. . . ."

"Thus," Kautsky concludes, "the Soviet form of organisation is one of the most important phenomena of our time. It promises to acquire decisive importance in the great decisive battles between capital and labour towards which we are marching.

"But are we entitled to demand more of the Soviets? The Bolsheviks, after the November Revolution" (new style, or October, according to our style) "1917, secured in conjunction with the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries a majority in the Russian Soviets of Workers' Deputies, and after the dissolution of the Constituent Assembly, they set out to transform the Soviets from a *combat organisation* of one class, as they had been up to then, into a *state organisation*. They destroyed the democracy which the Russian people had won in the March" (new style, or February, our style) "Revolution. In line with this, the Bolsheviks have ceased to call themselves *Social-Democrats*. They call themselves *Communists*" (p. 33, Kautsky's italics).

Those who are familiar with Russian Menshevik literature will at once see how slavishly Kautsky copies Martov, Axelrod, Stein and Co. Yes, "slavishly", because Kautsky ridiculously distorts the facts in order to pander to Menshevik prejudices. Kautsky did not take the trouble, for instance, to ask his informants (Stein of Berlin, or Axelrod of Stockholm) *when* the questions of changing the name of the Bolsheviks to Communists and of the significance of the Soviets as state organisations were first raised. Had Kautsky made this simple inquiry he would not have penned these ludicrous lines, for both these questions were raised by the Bolsheviks in April 1917, for example, in my "Theses" of April 4, 1917,<sup>25</sup> i.e., long before the Revolution of October 1917 (and, of course, long before the dissolution of the Constituent Assembly on January 5, 1918).

But Kautsky's argument which I have just quoted in full represents the *crux* of the whole question of the Soviets. The crux is: should the Soviets aspire to become state organisations (in April 1917 the Bolsheviks put forward the slogan: "All Power to the Soviets!" and at the Bolshevik Party Conference held in

the same month they declared they were not satisfied with a bourgeois parliamentary republic but demanded a workers' and peasants' republic of the Paris Commune or Soviet type); or should the Soviets not strive for this, refrain from taking power into their hands, refrain from becoming state organisations and remain the "combat organisations" of one "class" (as Martov expressed it, embellishing by this innocent wish the fact that under Menshevik leadership the Soviets were *an instrument for the subjection of the workers to the bourgeoisie*)?

Kautsky slavishly repeats Martov's words, picks out fragments of the theoretical controversy between the Bolsheviki and the Mensheviks, and uncritically and senselessly transplants them to the general theoretical and general European field. The result is such a hodge-podge as to provoke Homeric laughter in every class-conscious Russian worker had he read these arguments of Kautsky's.

When we explain what the question at issue is, every worker in Europe (barring a handful of inveterate social-imperialists) will greet Kautsky with similar laughter.

Kautsky has rendered Martov a backhanded service by developing his mistake into a glaring absurdity. Indeed, look what Kautsky's argument amounts to.

The Soviets embrace all wage-workers. The old methods of economic and political struggle of the proletariat are inadequate against finance capital. The Soviets have a great role to play in the future, and not only in Russia. They will play a decisive role in great decisive battles between capital and labour in Europe. That is what Kautsky says.

Excellent. But won't the "decisive battles between capital and labour" decide which of the two classes will assume state power?

Nothing of the kind! Heaven forbid!

The Soviets, which embrace all the wage-workers, *must not become state organisations* in the "decisive" battles!

But what is the state?

The state is nothing but a machine for the suppression of one class by another.

Thus, the oppressed class, the vanguard of all the working and exploited people in modern society, must strive towards the "decisive battles between capital and labour", *but must not touch* the machine by means of which capital suppresses labour!—*It must not break up* that machine!—*It must not make use* of its all-embracing organisation *for suppressing the exploiters*!

Excellent, Mr. Kautsky, magnificent! "We" recognise the class struggle—in the same way as all liberals recognise it, i.e., without the overthrow of the bourgeoisie. . . .

This is where Kautsky's complete rupture both with Marxism and with socialism becomes obvious. Actually, it is desertion to the camp of the bourgeoisie, who are prepared to concede everything except the transformation of the organisations of the class which they oppress into state organisations. Kautsky can no longer save his position of trying to reconcile everything and of getting away from all profound contradictions with mere phrases.

Kautsky either rejects the assumption of state power by the working class altogether, or he concedes that the working class may take over the old, bourgeois state machine. But he will by no means concede that it must break it up, smash it, and replace it by a new, proletarian machine. Whichever way Kautsky's arguments are "interpreted", or "explained", his rupture with Marxism and his desertion to the bourgeoisie are obvious.

Back in the *Communist Manifesto*, describing what sort of state the victorious working class needs, Marx wrote: "the state, i.e., the proletariat organised as the ruling class". Now we have a man who claims still to be a Marxist coming forward and declaring that the proletariat, fully organised and waging the "decisive battle" against capital, *must not* transform its class organisation into a state organisation. Here Kautsky has betrayed that "superstitious belief in the state" which in Germany, as Engels wrote in 1891, "has been carried over into the general thinking of the bourgeoisie and even of many workers".<sup>26</sup> Workers, fight!—our philistine "agrees" to this (as every bourgeois "agrees", since the workers are fighting all the same, and the only thing to do is to devise means of blunting the edge of their sword)—fight, but *don't dare win*! Don't destroy the state machine of the bourgeoisie, don't replace the bourgeois "state organisation" by the proletarian "state organisation"!

Whoever sincerely shared the Marxist view that the state is nothing but a machine for the suppression of one class by another, and who has at all reflected upon this truth, could never have reached the absurd conclusion that the proletarian organisations capable of defeating finance capital must not transform themselves into state organisations. It was this point that betrayed the petty bourgeois who believes that "after all is said and done" the state is something outside classes or above classes. Indeed, why should the proletariat, "*one class*", be permitted to wage unremitting war on *capital*, which rules not only over the proletariat, but over the whole people, over the whole petty bourgeoisie, over all the peasants, yet this proletariat, this "*one class*", is not to be permitted to transform its organisation into a state organisation? Because the petty bourgeois is *afraid* of the class

struggle, and does not carry it to its logical conclusion, to its main object.

Kautsky has got himself completely mixed up and has given himself away entirely. Mark you, he himself admits that Europe is heading for decisive battles between capital and labour, and that the old methods of economic and political struggle of the proletariat are inadequate. But these old methods were precisely the utilisation of *bourgeois* democracy. It therefore follows...?

But Kautsky is afraid to think of what follows.

... It therefore follows that only a reactionary, an enemy of the working class, a henchman of the bourgeoisie, can now turn his face to the obsolete past, paint the charms of bourgeois democracy and babble about pure democracy. Bourgeois democracy *was* progressive compared with medievalism, and it had to be utilised. But now it is *not sufficient* for the working class. Now we must look forward instead of backward—to replacing the bourgeois democracy by *proletarian* democracy. And while the preparatory work for the proletarian revolution, the formation and training of the proletarian army were possible (and necessary) *within the framework* of the bourgeois-democratic state, now that we have reached the stage of “decisive battles”, to confine the proletariat to this framework means betraying the cause of the proletariat, means being a renegade.

Kautsky has made himself particularly ridiculous by repeating Martov's argument *without noticing* that in Martov's case this argument was based on *another* argument which he, Kautsky, does not use! Martov said (and Kautsky repeats after him) that Russia is not yet ripe for socialism; from which it logically follows that it is too early to transform the Soviets from organs of struggle into state organisations (read: it is timely to transform the Soviets, with the assistance of the Menshevik leaders, into instruments for *subjecting* the workers to the imperialist bourgeoisie). Kautsky, however, *cannot* say outright that Europe is not ripe for socialism. In 1909, when he was not yet a renegade, he wrote that there was then no reason to fear a *premature* revolution, that whoever had renounced revolution for fear of defeat would have been a traitor. Kautsky does not dare renounce this *outright*. And so we get an absurdity, which completely reveals the stupidity and cowardice of the petty bourgeois: on the one hand, Europe is ripe for socialism and is heading towards decisive battles between capital and labour; but, on the other hand, the *combat organisation* (i.e., the organisation which arises, grows and gains strength in combat), the organisation of the proletariat, the vanguard and organiser, the leader of the oppressed, *must not* be transformed into a state organisation!

\* \* \*

From the point of view of practical politics the idea that the Soviets are necessary as combat organisations but must not be transformed into state organisation is infinitely more absurd than from the point of view of theory. Even in peacetime, when there is no revolutionary situation, the mass struggle of the workers against the capitalists—for instance, the mass strike—gives rise to great bitterness on both sides, to fierce passions in the struggle, the bourgeoisie constantly insisting that they remain and mean to remain “masters in their own house”, etc. And in time of revolution, when political life reaches boiling point, an organisation like the Soviets, which embraces *all* the workers in *all* branches of industry, *all* the soldiers, and all the working and poorest sections of the rural population—such an organisation, of its own accord, with the development of the struggle, by the simple “logic” of attack and defence, comes inevitably to pose the question *point-blank*. The attempt to take up a middle position and to “reconcile” the proletariat with the bourgeoisie is sheer stupidity and doomed to miserable failure. That is what happened in Russia to the preachings of Martov and other Mensheviks, and that will inevitably happen in Germany and other countries if the Soviets succeed in developing on any wide scale, manage to unite and strengthen. To say to the Soviets: fight, but don’t take all state power into your hands, don’t become state organisations—is tantamount to preaching class collaboration and “social peace” between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie. It is ridiculous even to think that such a position in the midst of fierce struggle could lead to anything but ignominious failure. But it is Kautsky’s everlasting fate to sit between two stools. He pretends to disagree with the opportunists on everything in theory, but *in practice* he agrees with them on everything essential (i.e., on everything pertaining to revolution).

### THE CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY AND THE SOVIET REPUBLIC

The question of the Constituent Assembly and its dispersal by the Bolsheviks is the crux of Kautsky’s entire pamphlet. He constantly reverts to it, and the whole of this literary production of the ideological leader of the Second International is replete with innuendoes to the effect that the Bolsheviks have “destroyed democracy” (see one of the quotations from Kautsky above). The question is really an interesting and important one, because the relation between bourgeois democracy and proletarian democracy

here confronted the revolution in a *practical* form. Let us see how our "Marxist theoretician" has dealt with the question.

He quotes the "Theses on the Constituent Assembly", written by me and published in *Pravda* on December 26, 1917.\* One would think that no better evidence of Kautsky's serious approach to the subject, quoting as he does the documents, could be desired. But look *how* he quotes. He does not say that there were nineteen of these theses; he does not say that they dealt with the relation between the ordinary bourgeois republic with a Constituent Assembly and a Soviet republic, as well as with the *history* of the divergence in our revolution between the Constituent Assembly and the dictatorship of the proletariat. Kautsky ignores all that, and simply tells the reader that "two of them" (of the theses) "are particularly important": one stating that a split occurred among the Socialist-Revolutionaries after the elections to the Constituent Assembly, but before it was convened (Kautsky does not mention that this was the fifth thesis), and the other, that the republic of Soviets is in general a higher democratic form than the Constituent Assembly (Kautsky does not mention that this was the third thesis).

Only from this third thesis does Kautsky quote a part in full, namely, the following passage:

"The republic of Soviets is not only a higher type of democratic institution (as compared with the *usual* bourgeois republic crowned by a Constituent Assembly), but is the only form capable of securing the most painless\*\* transition to socialism" (Kautsky omits the word "usual" and the introductory words of the thesis: "For the transition from the bourgeois to the socialist system, for the dictatorship of the proletariat").

After quoting these words, Kautsky, with magnificent irony, exclaims:

"It is a pity that this conclusion was arrived at only after the Bolsheviks found themselves in the minority in the Constituent Assembly. Before that no one had demanded it more vociferously than Lenin."

This is literally what Kautsky says on page 31 of his book!

It is positively a gem! Only a sycophant of the bourgeoisie could present the question in such a false way as to give the reader the impression that all the Bolsheviks' talk about a higher

\* See present edition, Vol. 2, pp. 456-59.—*Ed.*

\*\* Incidentally, Kautsky, obviously trying to be ironical, repeatedly quotes the expression "most painless" transition; but as the shaft misses its mark, a few pages farther on he commits a slight forgery and falsely quotes it as a "painless" transition! Of course, by such means it is easy to put any absurdity into the mouth of an opponent. The forgery also helps him to evade the substance of the argument, namely, that the most painless transition to socialism is possible only when all the poor are organised to a man (Soviets) and when the core of state power (the proletariat) helps them to organise.

type of state was an invention which saw light of day *after* they found themselves in the minority in the Constituent Assembly! Such an infamous lie could only have been uttered by a scoundrel who has sold himself to the bourgeoisie, or, what is absolutely the same thing, who has placed his trust in Axelrod and is concealing the source of his information.

For everyone knows that on the very day of my arrival in Russia, on April 4, 1917, I publicly read my theses in which I proclaimed the superiority of the Paris Commune type of state over the bourgeois parliamentary republic. Afterwards I *repeatedly* stated this in print, as, for instance, in a pamphlet on political parties, which was translated into English and was published in January 1918 in the New York *Evening Post*.<sup>27</sup> More than that, the Conference of the Bolshevik Party held at the end of April 1917 adopted a resolution to the effect that a proletarian and peasant republic was superior to a bourgeois parliamentary republic, that our Party would not be satisfied with the latter, and that the Party Programme should be modified<sup>28</sup> accordingly.

In face of these facts, what name can be given to Kautsky's trick of assuring his German readers that I had been vigorously demanding the convocation of the Constituent Assembly, and that I began to "belittle" the honour and dignity of the Constituent Assembly only after the Bolsheviks found themselves in the minority in it? How can one excuse such a trick? By pleading that Kautsky did not know the facts? If that is the case, why did he undertake to write about them? Or why did he not honestly announced that he was writing on the strength of information supplied by the Mensheviks Stein and Axelrod and Co.? By pretending to be objective, Kautsky wants to conceal his role as the servant of the Mensheviks, who are disgruntled because they have been defeated.

This, however, is a mere trifle compared with what is to come.

Let us assume that Kautsky would not or could not (?) obtain from his informants a translation of the Bolshevik resolutions and declarations on the question of whether the Bolsheviks would be satisfied with a bourgeois parliamentary democratic republic or not. Let us assume this, although it is incredible. But Kautsky *directly mentions* my theses of December 26 1917, on page 30 of his book.

Does he not know these theses in full, or does he know only what was translated for him by the Steins, the Axelrods and Co.? Kautsky quotes the *third* thesis on the *fundamental* question of whether the Bolsheviks, *before* the elections to the Constituent

\* Incidentally, there are many Menshevik lies of this kind in Kautsky's pamphlet! It is a lampoon written by an embittered Menshevik.



Assembly, realised that a Soviet republic is superior to a bourgeois republic, and whether they told the *people* that. *But he keeps silent about the second thesis.*

The second thesis reads as follows:

"While demanding the convocation of a Constituent Assembly, revolutionary Social-Democracy has ever since the beginning of the revolution of 1917 *repeatedly emphasised that a republic of Soviets is a higher form of democracy than the usual bourgeois republic with a Constituent Assembly*" (my italics).

In order to represent the Bolsheviks as unprincipled people, as "revolutionary opportunists" (this is a term which Kautsky employs somewhere in his book, I forget in which connection), Mr. Kautsky *has concealed from his German readers* the fact that the theses contain a direct reference to "*repeated*" declarations!

These are the petty, miserable and contemptible methods Mr. Kautsky employs! That is the way he has evaded the *theoretical* question.

Is it true or not that the bourgeois-democratic parliamentary republic is *inferior* to the republic of the Paris Commune or Soviet type? This is the whole point, and Kautsky has evaded it. Kautsky has "forgotten" all that Marx said in his analysis of the Paris Commune. He has also "forgotten" Engels's letter to Bebel of March 28, 1875, in which this same idea of Marx is formulated in a particularly lucid and comprehensible fashion: "The Commune was no longer a state in the proper sense of the word."

Here is the most prominent theoretician of the Second International, in a special pamphlet on *The Dictatorship of the Proletariat*, specially dealing with Russia, where the question of a form of state that is higher than a democratic bourgeois republic has been raised directly and repeatedly, ignoring this very question. In what way does this differ *in fact* from desertion to the bourgeois camp?

(Let us observe in parenthesis that in this respect, too, Kautsky is merely trailing after the Russian Mensheviks. Among the latter there are any number of people who know "all the quotations" from Marx and Engels. Yet not a single Menshevik, from April to October 1917 and from October 1917 to October 1918, has ever made a single attempt to examine the question of the Paris Commune type of state. Plekhanov, too, has evaded the question. *Evidently he had to.*)

It goes without saying that to discuss the dispersal of the Constituent Assembly with people who call themselves socialists and Marxists, but who in fact desert to the bourgeoisie on the *main* question, the question of the Paris Commune type of state, would be casting pearls before swine. It will be sufficient to give the complete text of my theses on the Constituent Assembly as

an appendix to the present book. The reader will then see that the question was presented on December 26, 1917, in the light of theory, history and practical politics.

If Kautsky has completely renounced Marxism as a theoretician he might at least have examined the question of the struggle of the Soviets with the Constituent Assembly as a historian. We know from many of Kautsky's works that he *knew how* to be a Marxist historian, and that *such* works of his will remain a permanent possession of the proletariat in spite of his subsequent apostasy. But on this question Kautsky, even as a historian, *turns his back* on the truth, ignores *well-known* facts and behaves like a sycophant. He *wants* to represent the Bolsheviki as being unprincipled and he tells his readers that they tried to *mitigate* the conflict with the Constituent Assembly before dispersing it. There is absolutely nothing wrong about it, we have nothing to recant; I give the theses in full and there it is said as clear as clear can be: Gentlemen of the vacillating petty bourgeoisie entrenched in the Constituent Assembly, either reconcile yourselves to the proletarian dictatorship, or else we shall defeat you by "revolutionary means" (theses 18 and 19).

That is how a really revolutionary proletariat has always behaved and always will behave towards the vacillating petty bourgeoisie.

Kautsky adopts a formal standpoint on the question of the Constituent Assembly. My theses say clearly and repeatedly that the interests of the revolution are higher than the formal rights of the Constituent Assembly (see theses 16 and 17). The formal democratic point of view is precisely the point of view of the *bourgeois* democrat who refuses to admit that the interests of the proletariat and of the proletarian class struggle are supreme. As a historian, Kautsky would not have been able to deny that bourgeois parliaments are the organs of this or that class. But now (for the sordid purpose of renouncing revolution) Kautsky finds it necessary to forget his Marxism, and he *refrains from putting the question*: the organ of what *class* was the Constituent Assembly of Russia? Kautsky does not examine the concrete conditions; he does not want to face facts: he does not say a single word to his German readers about the fact that the theses contained not only a theoretical elucidation of the question of the limited character of bourgeois democracy (theses 1-3), not only a description of the concrete conditions which determined the discrepancy between the party lists of candidates in the middle of October 1917 and the real state of affairs in December 1917 (theses 4-6), but also *a history of the class struggle and the Civil War* in October-December 1917 (theses 7-15). From this concrete history we drew the conclusion (thesis 14) that the slogan "All

Power to the Constituent Assembly!" had, *in reality*, become the slogan of the Cadets<sup>29</sup> and the Kaledin men and their abettors.

Kautsky the historian fails to see this. Kautsky the historian has never heard that universal suffrage sometimes produces petty-bourgeois, sometimes reactionary and counter-revolutionary parliaments. Kautsky the Marxist historian has never heard that the form of elections, the form of democracy, is one thing, and the class content of the given institution is another. This question of the class content of the Constituent Assembly is directly put and answered in my theses. Perhaps my answer is wrong. Nothing would have been more welcome to us than a Marxist criticism of our analysis by an outsider. Instead of writing utterly silly phrases (of which there are plenty in Kautsky's book) about somebody preventing criticism of Bolshevism, he ought to have set out to make such a criticism. But the point is that he offers no criticism. He does not even *raise the question* of a class analysis of the Soviets on the one hand, and of the Constituent Assembly on the other. It is therefore *impossible* to argue, to debate with Kautsky. All we can do is *demonstrate* to the reader why Kautsky cannot be called anything else but a renegade.

The divergence between the Soviets and the Constituent Assembly has its history, which even a historian who does not share the point of view of the class struggle could not have ignored. Kautsky would not *touch* upon this actual history. Kautsky has concealed from his German readers the universally known fact (which only malignant Mensheviks now conceal) that the divergence between the Soviets and the "general state" (that is, bourgeois) institutions existed even under the rule of the Mensheviks, i.e., from the end of February to October 1917. Actually, Kautsky adopts the position of conciliation, compromise and collaboration between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie. However much Kautsky may repudiate this, it is a fact which is borne out by his whole pamphlet. To say that the Constituent Assembly should not have been dispersed is tantamount to saying that the fight against the bourgeoisie should not have been fought to a finish, that the bourgeoisie should not have been overthrown and that the proletariat should have made peace with them.

Why has Kautsky kept quiet about the fact that the Mensheviks were engaged in this inglorious work between February and October 1917 and did not achieve anything? If it was possible to reconcile the bourgeoisie with the proletariat, why didn't the Mensheviks succeed in doing so? Why did the bourgeoisie stand aloof from the Soviets? Why did the *Mensheviks* call the Soviets "revolutionary democracy", and the bourgeoisie the "propertied elements"?

Kautsky has concealed from his German readers that it was the Mensheviks who, in the "epoch" of their rule (February to October 1917), called the Soviets "revolutionary democracy", *thereby* admitting their superiority over all other institutions. It is only by concealing this fact that Kautsky the historian made it appear that the divergence between the Soviets and the bourgeoisie had no history, that it arose instantaneously, without cause, suddenly, because of the bad behaviour of the Bolsheviks. Yet, in actual fact, it was *the more than six months'* (an enormous period in time of revolution) *experience* of Menshevik compromise, of their attempts to reconcile the proletariat with the bourgeoisie, that convinced the people of the fruitlessness of these attempts and drove the proletariat away from the Mensheviks.

Kautsky admits that the Soviets are an excellent combat organisation of the proletariat, and that they have a great future before them. But, that being the case, Kautsky's position collapses like a house of cards, or like the dreams of a petty bourgeois that the acute struggle between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie can be avoided. For revolution is one continuous and moreover desperate struggle, and the proletariat is the vanguard class of *all* the oppressed, the focus and centre of all the aspirations of all the oppressed for their emancipation! Naturally, therefore, the Soviets, as the organ of the struggle of the oppressed people, reflected and expressed the moods and changes of opinions of these people ever so much more quickly, fully, and faithfully than any other institution (that, incidentally, is one of the reasons why Soviet democracy is the highest type of democracy).

In the period between February 28 (old style) and October 25, 1917, the Soviets managed to convene *two* all-Russia congresses of representatives of the overwhelming majority of the population of Russia, of all the workers and soldiers, and of 70 or 80 per cent of the peasants, not to mention the vast number of local, uyezd, town, gubernia, and regional congresses. During this period the bourgeoisie did not succeed in convening a single institution representing the majority (except that obvious sham and mockery called the "Democratic Conference",<sup>30</sup> which enraged the proletariat). The Constituent Assembly reflected *the same* popular mood and *the same* political grouping as the First (June) All-Russia Congress of Soviets. By the time the Constituent Assembly was convened (January 1918), the Second (October 1917) and Third (January 1918) Congresses of Soviets had met, both of which had *demonstrated as clear as clear could* be that the people had swung to the left, had become revolutionised, had turned away from the Mensheviks and the Socialist-Revolutionaries, and had passed over to the side of the Bolsheviks; *that is*, had turned away from petty-bourgeois leadership, from the illusion that it

was possible to reach a compromise with the bourgeoisie, and had joined the proletarian revolutionary struggle for the overthrow of the bourgeoisie.

So, even the *external history* of the Soviets shows that the Constituent Assembly was a *reactionary* body and that its dispersal was inevitable. But Kautsky sticks firmly to his "slogan": let "pure democracy" prevail though the revolution perish and the bourgeoisie triumph over the proletariat! *Fiat justitia, percat mundus!*<sup>\*</sup>

Here are the brief figures relating to the all-Russia congresses of Soviets in the course of the history of the Russian revolution:

All-Russia Congress of Soviets	Number of Delegates	Number of Bolsheviks	Percentage of Bolsheviks
First (June 3, 1917)	790	103	13
Second (October 25, 1917)	675	343	51
Third (January 10, 1918)	710	434	61
Fourth (March 14, 1918)	1,232	795	64
Fifth (July 4, 1918)	1,164	773	66

One glance at these figures is enough to understand why the defence of the Constituent Assembly and talk (like Kautsky's) about the Bolsheviks not having a majority of the population behind them are just ridiculed in Russia.

## THE SOVIET CONSTITUTION

As I have already pointed out, the disfranchisement of the bourgeoisie is not a necessary and indispensable feature of the dictatorship of the proletariat. And in Russia, the Bolsheviks, who long before October put forward the slogan of proletarian dictatorship, did not say anything in advance about disfranchising the exploiters. *This* aspect of the dictatorship did not make its appearance "according to the plan" of any particular party; it *emerged* of itself in the course of the struggle. Of course, Kautsky the historian failed to notice this. He failed to understand that even when the Mensheviks (who compromised with the bourgeoisie) still ruled the Soviets, the bourgeoisie cut themselves off from the Soviets of their own accord, boycotted them, put themselves up in opposition to them and intrigued against them. The Soviets arose without any constitution and existed without one for *more than a year* (from the spring of 1917 to the summer of 1918). The fury of the bourgeoisie against this independent and omnipotent (because it was all-embracing) organisation of

Let justice be done even though the world may perish — *Ed*

the oppressed; the fight, the unscrupulous, self-seeking and sordid fight, the bourgeoisie waged against the Soviets; and, lastly, the overt participation of the bourgeoisie (from the Cadets to the Right Socialist-Revolutionaries, from Milyukov to Kerensky) in the Kornilov mutiny<sup>31</sup>—all this *paved the way* for the formal exclusion of the bourgeoisie from the Soviets.

Kautsky has heard about the Kornilov mutiny, but he majestically scorns historical facts and the course and forms of the struggle which determine the *forms* of the dictatorship. Indeed, who should care about facts where “pure” democracy is involved? That is why Kautsky’s “criticism” of the disfranchisement of the bourgeoisie is distinguished by such . . . sweet naïveté, which would be touching in a child but is repulsive in a person who has not yet been officially certified as feeble-minded.

“... If the capitalists found themselves in an insignificant minority under universal suffrage they would more readily become reconciled to their fate” (p. 33). . . . Charming, isn’t it? Clever Kautsky has seen many cases in history, and, generally, knows perfectly well from his own observations of life of landowners and capitalists reckoning with the will of the majority of the oppressed. Clever Kautsky firmly advocates an “opposition”, i.e., parliamentary struggle. That is literally what he says: “opposition” (p. 34 and elsewhere).

My dear learned historian and politician! It would not harm you to know that “opposition” is a concept that belongs to the peaceful and only to the parliamentary struggle, i.e., a concept that corresponds to a non-revolutionary situation, a concept that corresponds to an *absence of revolution*. During revolution we have to deal with a ruthless enemy in civil war; and no reactionary jeremiads of a petty bourgeois who fears such a war, as Kautsky does, will alter the fact. To examine the problems of ruthless civil war from the point of view of “opposition” at a time when the bourgeoisie are prepared to commit any crime—the example of the Versailles men<sup>32</sup> and their deals with Bismarck must mean something to every person who does not treat history like Gogol’s *Petrushka*<sup>33</sup>—when the bourgeoisie are summoning foreign states to their aid and intriguing with them against the revolution, is simply comical. The revolutionary proletariat is to put on a nightcap, like “Muddle-headed Counsellor” Kautsky, and regard the bourgeoisie, who are organising Dutov, Krasnov and Czech counter-revolutionary insurrections<sup>34</sup> and are paying millions to saboteurs, as a legal “opposition”. Oh, what profundity!

Kautsky is exclusively interested in the formal, legal aspect of the question, and, reading his disquisitions on the Soviet Constitution, one involuntarily recalls Bebel’s words: Lawyers are thoroughbred reactionaries. “In reality,” Kautsky writes, “the

capitalists alone cannot be disfranchised. What is a capitalist in the legal sense of the term? A property-owner? Even in a country which has advanced so far along the path of economic progress as Germany, where the proletariat is so numerous, the establishment of a Soviet republic would disfranchise a large mass of people. In 1907, the number of persons in the German Empire engaged in the three great occupational groups—agriculture, industry and commerce—together with their families amounted roughly to thirty-five million in the wage-earners' and salaried employees' group, and seventeen million in the independent group. Hence, a party might well form a majority among the wage-workers but a minority among the population as a whole" (p. 33).

That is an example of Kautsky's mode of argument. Isn't it the counter-revolutionary whining of a bourgeois? Why, Mr. Kautsky, have you relegated all the "independents" to the category of the disfranchised, when you know very well that the overwhelming majority of the Russian peasants do not employ hired labour, and do not, therefore, lose their franchise? Isn't this falsification?

Why, learned economist, did you not quote the facts with which you are perfectly familiar and which are to be found in those same German statistical returns for 1907 relating to hired labour in agriculture according to size of farms? Why did you not quote these facts to enable the German workers, the readers of your pamphlet, to see *how many exploiters there are*, and how few they are compared with the total number of "farmers" who figure in German statistics?

You did not because your apostasy has made you a mere sycophant of the bourgeoisie.

The term capitalist, Kautsky argues, is legally a vague concept, and on several pages he thunders against the "arbitrariness" of the Soviet Constitution. This "serious scholar" has no objection to the British bourgeoisie taking several centuries to work out and develop a new (new for the Middle Ages) bourgeois constitution, but, representative of lackey's science that he is, he will allow no time to us, the workers and peasants of Russia. He expects us to have a constitution all worked out to the very last letter in a few months. . . .

"Arbitrariness!" Just imagine what a depth of vile subservience to the bourgeoisie and most inept pedantry is contained in *such* a reproach. When thoroughly bourgeois and for the most part reactionary lawyers in the capitalist countries have for centuries or decades been drawing up most detailed rules and regulations and writing scores and hundreds of volumes of laws and interpretations of laws to *oppress* the workers, to bind the *poor man* hand and foot and to place thousands of hindrances and obstacles

in the way of any of the common labouring people—there the bourgeois liberals and Mr. Kautsky see no “arbitrariness”! That is “law” and “order”! The ways in which the poor are to be “kept down” have all been thought out and written down. There are thousands of bourgeois lawyers and bureaucrats (about them Kautsky says nothing at all, probably just because Marx attached enormous significance to *smashing* the bureaucratic machine. . .) —lawyers and bureaucrats who know how to interpret the laws in such a way that the worker and the average peasant can never break through the barbed-wire entanglements of these laws. This is not “arbitrariness” on the part of the bourgeoisie, it is not the dictatorship of the sordid and self-seeking exploiters who are sucking the blood of the people. Nothing of the kind! It is “pure democracy”, which is becoming purer and purer every day.

But now that the toiling and exploited classes, while cut off by the imperialist war from their brothers across the border, have for the first time in history set up their *own* Soviets, have called to the work of political construction *those people* whom the bourgeoisie used to oppress, grind down and stupefy, and have begun *themselves* to build a *new*, proletarian state, have begun in the heat of furious struggle, in the fire of civil war, to *sketch* the fundamental principles of a state *without exploiters*—all the bourgeois scoundrels, the whole gang of bloodsuckers, with Kautsky echoing them, howl about “arbitrariness”! Indeed, how will these ignorant people, these workers and peasants, this “mob” be able to interpret their laws? How can these common labourers acquire a sense of justice without the counsel of educated lawyers, of bourgeois writers, of the Kautskys and the wise old bureaucrats?

Mr. Kautsky quotes from my speech of April 28, 1918,<sup>35</sup> the words: “The people themselves determine the procedure and the time of elections.” And Kautsky, the “pure democrat”, infers from this:

‘ . . . Hence, it would mean that every assembly of electors may determine the procedure of elections at their own discretion. Arbitrariness and the opportunity of getting rid of undesirable opposition in the ranks of the proletariat itself would thus be carried to the extreme” (p. 37).

Well, how does this differ from the talk of a hack hired by capitalists, who howls about the people oppressing industrious workers who are “willing to work” during a strike? Why is the *bourgeois* bureaucratic method of determining electoral procedure under “pure” bourgeois democracy *not* arbitrariness? Why should the sense of justice *among the masses who have risen to fight* their age-old exploiters and who are being educated and steeled in this desperate struggle be less than that of a *handful* of bureaucrats, intellectuals and lawyers brought up in *bourgeois* prejudices?



Kautsky is a true socialist. Don't dare suspect the sincerity of this very respectable father of a family, of this very honest citizen. He is an ardent and convinced supporter of the victory of the workers, of the proletarian revolution. All he wants is that the honey-mouthed, petty-bourgeois intellectuals and philistines in nightcaps should *first—before* the masses begin to move, *before* they start a furious battle with the exploiters, and certainly *without* civil war—draw up a moderate and precise *set of rules for the development of the revolution*. . . .

Burning with profound moral indignation, our most learned Judas Golovlyov<sup>36</sup> tells the German workers that on June 14, 1918, the All-Russia Central Executive Committee of Soviets resolved to expel the representatives of the Right Socialist-Revolutionary Party and the Mensheviks from the Soviets. "This measure," writes Judas Kautsky, all afire with noble indignation, "is not directed against definite persons guilty of definite punishable offences. . . . The Constitution of the Soviet Republic does not contain a single word about the immunity of Soviet deputies. It is not definite *persons*, but definite *parties* that are expelled from the Soviets" (p. 37).

Yes, that is really awful, an intolerable departure from pure democracy, according to the rules of which our revolutionary Judas Kautsky will make the revolution. We Russian Bolsheviks should first have guaranteed immunity to the Savinkovs and Co., to the Lieberdants,<sup>37</sup> Potresovs ("activists"<sup>38</sup>) and Co., then drawn up a criminal code proclaiming participation in the Czech counter-revolutionary war, or in the alliance with the German imperialists in the Ukraine or in Georgia *against* the workers of one's own country, to be "punishable offences", and *only then*, on the basis of this criminal code, would we be entitled, in accordance with the principles of "pure democracy", to expel "definite persons" from the Soviets. It goes without saying that the Czechs, who are subsidised by the British and French capitalists through the medium (or thanks to the agitation) of the Savinkovs, Potresovs and Lieberdants, and the Krasnovs who receive ammunition from the Germans through the medium of the Ukrainian and Tiflis Mensheviks, would have sat quietly waiting until we were ready with our proper criminal code, and, like the purest democrats they are, would have confined themselves to the role of an "opposition". . . .

No less profound moral indignation is aroused in Kautsky's breast by the fact that the Soviet Constitution disfranchises all those who "employ hired labour with a view to profit". "A home-worker, or a small master employing only one journeyman," Kautsky writes, "may live and feel quite like a proletarian, but he has no vote" (p. 36).

What a departure from "pure democracy"! What an injustice!

True, up to now all Marxists have thought—and thousands of facts have proved it—that the small masters were the most unscrupulous and grasping exploiters of hired labour, but our Judas Kautsky takes the small masters not as a *class* (who invented that pernicious theory of the class struggle?) but as single individuals, exploiters who “live and feel quite like proletarians”. The famous “thrifty Agnes”, who was considered dead and buried long ago, has come to life again under Kautsky’s pen. This “thrifty Agnes” was invented and launched into German literature some decades ago by that “pure” democrat, the bourgeois Eugen Richter. He predicted untold calamities that would follow the dictatorship of the proletariat, the confiscation of the capital of the exploiters, and asked with an innocent air: What is a capitalist in the legal sense of the term? He took as an example a poor, thrifty seamstress (“thrifty Agnes”), whom the wicked “proletarian dictators” rob of her last farthing. There was a time when all German Social-Democrats used to poke fun at this “thrifty Agnes” of the pure democrat, Eugen Richter. But that was a long, long time ago, when Bebel, who was quite frank and open about there being many national-liberals<sup>39</sup> in his party, was still alive; that was very long ago, when Kautsky was not yet a renegade.

Now “thrifty Agnes” has come to life again in the person of the “small master who employs only one journeyman and who lives and feels quite like a proletarian”. The wicked Bolsheviks are wronging him, depriving him of his vote. It is true that “every assembly of electors” in the Soviet Republic, as Kautsky tells us, may admit into its midst a poor little master who, for instance, may be connected with this or that factory, if, by way of an exception, he is not an exploiter, and if he *really* “lives and feels quite like a proletarian”. But can one rely on the knowledge of life, on the sense of justice of an irregular factory meeting of common workers acting (how awful!) without a written code? Would it not clearly be better to grant the vote to *all* exploiters, to *all* who employ hired labour, rather than risk the possibility of “thrifty Agnes” and the “small master who lives and feels quite like a proletarian” being wronged by the workers?

\* \* \*

Let the contemptible renegade scoundrels, amidst the applause of the bourgeoisie and the social-chauvinists, abuse our Soviet Constitution for disfranchising the exploiters! That’s fine because

I have just read a leading article in *Frankfurter Zeitung*<sup>40</sup> (No. 298, October 22, 1918), giving an enthusiastic summary of Kautsky’s pamphlet. This organ of the stock exchange is satisfied. And no wonder! And a comrade writes to me from Berlin that *Vorwärts*<sup>41</sup>, the organ of the Scheidemanns, has declared in a special article that it subscribes to almost every line Kautsky<sup>42</sup> has written. Hearty congratulations!

it will accelerate and widen the split between the revolutionary workers of Europe and the Scheidemanns and Kautskys, the Renaudels and Longuets, the Hendersons and Ramsay MacDonalds, the old leaders and old betrayers of socialism.

The mass of the oppressed classes, the class-conscious and honest revolutionary proletarian leaders will be *on our side*. It will be enough to acquaint such proletarians and such people with our Soviet Constitution for them to say at once: "These are really *our people*, this is a real workers' party, this is a real workers' government, for it does not deceive the workers by talking about reforms in the way *all the above-mentioned leaders have done*, but is fighting the exploiters in real earnest, making a revolution in real earnest and *actually* fighting for the complete emancipation of the workers."

The *fact* that after a year's "experience" the Soviets have deprived the exploiters of the franchise *shows* that the Soviets are really organisations of the oppressed and not of social-imperialists and social-pacifists who have sold themselves to the bourgeoisie. The *fact* that the Soviets have disfranchised the exploiters *shows* they are not organs of petty-bourgeois compromise with the capitalists, not organs of parliamentary chatter (on the part of the Kautskys, the Longuets and the MacDonalds), but organs of the genuinely revolutionary proletariat which is waging a life-and-death struggle against the exploiters.

"Kautsky's book is almost unknown here," a well-informed comrade wrote to me from Berlin a few days ago (today is October 30). I would advise our ambassadors in Germany and Switzerland not to stint thousands in buying up this book and *distributing it gratis* among the class-conscious workers so as to trample in the mud this "European"—read: imperialist and reformist—Social-Democracy, which has long been a "stinking corpse".

At the end of his book, on pages 61 and 63, Mr. Kautsky bitterly laments the fact that the "new theory" (as he calls Bolshevism, fearing to touch Marx's and Engels's analysis of the Paris Commune) "finds supporters even in old democracies like Switzerland, for instance". "It is incomprehensible" to Kautsky "how this theory can be adopted by German Social-Democrats".

No, it is quite comprehensible; for after the serious lessons of the war the revolutionary masses are becoming sick and tired of the Scheidemanns and the Kautskys.

"We" have always been in favour of democracy, Kautsky writes, yet we are supposed suddenly to renounce it!

"We", the opportunists of Social-Democracy, have always been opposed to the dictatorship of the proletariat, and Kolb and Co.

proclaimed this *long ago*. Kautsky knows this and vainly expects that he will be able to conceal from his readers the obvious fact that he has "returned to the fold" of the Bernsteins and Kolbs.

"We", the revolutionary Marxists, have never made a fetish of "pure" (bourgeois) democracy. As is known, in 1903 Plekhanov was a revolutionary Marxist (later his unfortunate turn brought him to the position of a Russian Scheidemann). And in that year Plekhanov declared at our Party Congress, which was then adopting its programme, that in the revolution the proletariat would, if necessary, disfranchise the capitalists and *disperse any parliament* that was found to be counter-revolutionary.<sup>43</sup> That this is the only view that corresponds to Marxism will be clear to anybody even from the statements of Marx and Engels which I have quoted above; it patently follows from all the fundamental principles of Marxism.

"We", the revolutionary Marxists, never made speeches to the people that the Kautskyites of all nations love to make, cringing before the bourgeoisie, adapting themselves to the bourgeois parliamentary system, keeping silent about the *bourgeois* character of modern democracy and demanding only *its* extension, only that *it* be carried to its logical conclusion.

"We" said to the bourgeoisie: You, exploiters and hypocrites, talk about democracy, while at every step you erect thousands of barriers to prevent the *oppressed people* from taking part in politics. We take you at your word and, in the interests of these people, demand the extension of *your* bourgeois democracy *in order to prepare the people for revolution* for the purpose of overthrowing you, the exploiters. And if you exploiters attempt to offer resistance to our proletarian revolution we shall ruthlessly suppress you; we shall deprive you of all rights; more than that, we shall not give you any bread, for in our proletarian republic the exploiters will have no rights, they will be deprived of fire and water, for we are socialists in real earnest, and not in the Scheidemann or Kautsky fashion.

That is what "we", the revolutionary Marxists, said, and will say—and that is why the oppressed people will support us and be with us, while the Scheidemanns and the Kautskys will be swept into the renegades' cesspool.

## WHAT IS INTERNATIONALISM?

Kautsky is absolutely convinced that he is an internationalist and calls himself one. The Scheidemanns he calls "government socialists". In defending the Mensheviks (he does not openly express his solidarity with them, but he faithfully expresses their

views), Kautsky has shown with perfect clarity what kind of "internationalism" he subscribes to. And since Kautsky is not alone, but is spokesman for a trend which inevitably grew up in the atmosphere of the Second International (Longuet in France, Turati in Italy, Nobs and Grimm, Graber and Naine in Switzerland, Ramsay MacDonald in Britain, etc.), it will be instructive to dwell on Kautsky's "internationalism".

After emphasising that the Mensheviks also attended the Zimmerwald Conference (a diploma, certainly, but . . . a tainted one), Kautsky sets forth the views of the Mensheviks, with whom he agrees, in the following manner:

"...The Mensheviks wanted a general peace. They wanted all the belligerents to adopt the formula: no annexations and no indemnities. Until this had been achieved, the Russian army, according to this view, was to stand ready for battle. The Bolsheviks, on the other hand, demanded an immediate peace at any price; they were prepared, if need be, to make a separate peace; they tried to force it by increasing the state of disorganisation of the army, which was already bad enough" (p. 27). In Kautsky's opinion the Bolsheviks should not have taken power, and should have contented themselves with a Constituent Assembly.

So, the internationalism of Kautsky and the Mensheviks amounts to this: to demand reforms from the imperialist bourgeois government, but to continue to support it, and to continue to support the war that this government is waging until everyone in the war has accepted the formula: no annexations and no indemnities. This view was repeatedly expressed by Turati, and by the Kautsky supporters (Haase and others), and by Longuet and Co., who declared that they stood *for* defence of the fatherland.

Theoretically, this shows a complete inability to dissociate oneself from the social-chauvinists and complete confusion on the question of defence of the fatherland. Politically, it means substituting petty-bourgeois nationalism for internationalism, deserting to the reformists' camp and renouncing revolution.

From the point of view of the proletariat, recognising "defence of the fatherland" means justifying the present war, admitting that it is legitimate. And since the war remains an imperialist war (both under a monarchy and under a republic), irrespective of the country—mine or some other country—in which the enemy troops are stationed at the given moment, recognising defence of the fatherland means, *in fact*, supporting the imperialist, predatory bourgeoisie, and completely betraying socialism. In Russia, even under Kerensky, under the bourgeois-democratic republic, the war continued to be an imperialist war, for it was being waged by the bourgeoisie as a ruling class (and war is a "continuation of politics"); and a particularly striking expression

of the imperialist character of the war were the secret treaties for the partitioning of the world and the plunder of other countries which had been concluded by the tsar at the time with the capitalists of Britain and France.

The Mensheviks deceived the people in a most despicable manner by calling this war a defensive or revolutionary war. And by approving the policy of the Mensheviks, Kautsky is approving the popular deception, is approving the part played by the petty bourgeoisie in helping capital to trick the workers and harness them to the chariot of the imperialists. Kautsky is pursuing a characteristically petty-bourgeois, philistine policy by pretending (and trying to make the people believe the absurd idea) that *putting forward a slogan* alters the position. The entire history of bourgeois democracy refutes this illusion; the bourgeois democrats have always advanced all sorts of "slogans" to deceive the people. The point is to *test* their sincerity, to compare their words with their *deeds*, not to be satisfied with idealistic or charlatan *phrases*, but to get down to *class reality*. An imperialist war does not cease to be imperialist when charlatans or phrase-mongers or petty-bourgeois philistines put forward sentimental "slogans", but only when the *class* which is conducting the imperialist war, and is bound to it by millions of economic threads (and even ropes), is really *overthrown* and is replaced at the helm of state by the really revolutionary class, the proletariat. *There is no other way of getting out of an imperialist war, as also out of an imperialist predatory peace.*

By approving the foreign policy of the Mensheviks, and by declaring it to be internationalist and Zimmerwaldist, Kautsky, first, reveals the utter rottenness of the opportunist Zimmerwald majority (no wonder we, the *Left Zimmerwaldists*,<sup>44</sup> at once dissociated ourselves from such a majority!), and, secondly—and this is the chief thing—passes from the position of the proletariat to the position of the petty bourgeoisie, from the revolutionary to the reformist.

The proletariat fights for the revolutionary overthrow of the imperialist bourgeoisie; the petty bourgeoisie fights for the reformist "improvement" of imperialism, for adaptation to it, while *submitting* to it. When Kautsky was still a Marxist, for example, in 1909, when he wrote his *Road to Power*, it was the idea that war would inevitably lead to *revolution* that he advocated, and he spoke of the approach of an *era of revolutions*. The Basle Manifesto of 1912 plainly and definitely speaks of a *proletarian revolution* in connection with that very imperialist war between the German and the British groups which actually broke out in 1914. But in 1918, when revolutions did begin in connection with the war, Kautsky, instead of explaining that they were inevitable,

instead of pondering over and thinking out the *revolutionary* tactics and the ways and means of preparing for revolution, began to describe the reformist tactics of the Mensheviks as internationalism. Isn't this apostasy?

Kautsky praises the Mensheviks for having insisted on maintaining the fighting strength of the army, and he blames the Bolsheviks for having added to "disorganisation of the army", which was already disorganised enough as it was. This means praising reformism and submission to the imperialist bourgeoisie, and blaming and renouncing revolution. For under Kerensky maintaining the fighting strength of the army meant its preservation under *bourgeois* (albeit republican) command. Everybody knows, and the progress of events has strikingly confirmed it, that this republican army preserved the *Kornilov* spirit because its officers were Kornilov men. The bourgeois officers could not help being Kornilov men; they could not help gravitating towards imperialism and towards the forcible suppression of the proletariat. All that the Menshevik tactics amounted to *in practice* was to leave all the foundations of the imperialist war and all the foundations of the *bourgeois* dictatorship intact, to patch up details and to daub over a few trifles ("reforms").

On the other hand, not a single great revolution has ever taken place, or ever can take place, without the "disorganisation" of the army. For the army is the most ossified instrument for supporting the old regime, the most hardened bulwark of bourgeois discipline, buttressing up the rule of capital, and preserving and fostering among the working people the servile spirit of submission and subjection to capital. Counter-revolution has never tolerated, and never could tolerate, armed workers side by side with the army. In France, Engels wrote, the workers emerged armed from every revolution: "therefore, the disarming of the workers was the first commandment for the bourgeoisie, who were at the helm of the state."<sup>45</sup> The armed workers were the embryo of a *new* army, the organised nucleus of a *new* social order. The first commandment of the bourgeoisie was to crush this nucleus and prevent it from growing. The first commandment of every victorious revolution, as Marx and Engels repeatedly emphasised, was to smash the old army, dissolve it and replace it by a new one.<sup>46</sup> A new social class, when rising to power, never could, and cannot now, attain power and consolidate it except by completely disintegrating the old army ("Disorganisation!" the reactionary or just cowardly philistines howl on this score), except by passing through a most difficult and painful period without any army (the great French Revolution also passed through such a painful period), and by gradually building up, in the midst of hard civil war, a new army, a new discipline, a new military organisation of the new

class. Formerly, Kautsky the historian understood this. Now, Kautsky the renegade has forgotten it.

What right has Kautsky to call the Scheidemanns "government socialists" if he *approves* of the tactics of the Mensheviks in the Russian revolution? In supporting Kerensky and joining his Ministry, the Mensheviks were also government socialists. Kautsky could not escape this conclusion if he were to put the question as to which is the *ruling class* that is waging the imperialist war. But Kautsky avoids raising the question about the ruling class, a question that is imperative for a Marxist, for the mere raising of it would expose the renegade.

The Kautsky supporters in Germany, the Longuet supporters in France, and Turati and Co. in Italy argue in this way: socialism presupposes the equality and freedom of nations, their self-determination, *hence*, when our country is attacked, or when enemy troops invade our territory, it is the right and duty of socialists to defend their country. But theoretically such an argument is either a sheer mockery of socialism or a fraudulent subterfuge, while from the point of view of practical politics it coincides with the argument of the quite ignorant country yokel who has even no conception of the social, class character of the war, and of the tasks of a revolutionary party during a reactionary war.

Socialism is opposed to violence against nations. That is indisputable. But socialism is opposed to violence against men in general. Apart from Christian anarchists and Tolstoyans, however, no one has yet drawn the conclusion from this that socialism is opposed to *revolutionary* violence. So, to talk about "violence" in general, without examining the conditions which distinguish reactionary from revolutionary violence, means being a philistine who renounces revolution, or else it means simply deceiving oneself and others by sophistry.

The same holds true of violence against nations. Every war is violence against nations, but that does not prevent socialists from being *in favour* of a revolutionary war. The class character of war—that is the fundamental question which confronts a socialist (if he is not a renegade). The imperialist war of 1914-18 is a war between two groups of the imperialist bourgeoisie for the division of the world, for the division of the booty, and for the plunder and strangulation of small and weak nations. This was the appraisal of the impending war given in the Basle Manifesto in 1912, and it has been confirmed by the facts. Whoever departs from this view of war is not a socialist.

If a German under Wilhelm or a Frenchman under Clemenceau says, "It is my right and duty as a socialist to defend my country if it is invaded by an enemy", he argues not like a socialist, not like an internationalist, not like a revolutionary proletarian. but



like a *petty-bourgeois nationalist*. Because this argument ignores the revolutionary class struggle of the workers against capital, it ignores the appraisal of the war as a *whole* from the point of view of the world bourgeoisie and the world proletariat, that is, it ignores internationalism, and all that remains is miserable and narrow-minded nationalism. My country is being wronged, that is all I care about—that is what this argument amounts to, and that is where its petty-bourgeois, nationalist narrow-mindedness lies. It is the same as if in regard to individual violence, violence against an individual, one were to argue that socialism is opposed to violence and therefore I would rather be a traitor than go to prison.

The Frenchman, German or Italian who says: "Socialism is opposed to violence against nations, *therefore* I defend myself when my country is invaded", *betrays* socialism and internationalism, because such a man *sees only* his own "country", he puts "his own" . . . *bourgeoisie* above everything else and does not give a thought to the *international connections* which make the war an imperialist war and *his* bourgeoisie a link in the chain of imperialist plunder.

All philistines and all stupid and ignorant yokels argue in the same way as the renegade Kautsky supporters, Longuet supporters, Turati and Co.: "The enemy has invaded my country, I don't care about anything else."<sup>\*</sup>

The socialist, the revolutionary proletarian, the internationalist, argues differently. He says: "The character of the war (whether it is reactionary or revolutionary) does not depend on who the attacker was, or in whose country the 'enemy' is stationed; it depends on *what class* is waging the war, and on what politics this war is a continuation of. If the war is a reactionary, imperialist war, that is, if it is being waged by two world groups of the imperialist, rapacious, predatory, reactionary bourgeoisie, then every bourgeoisie (even of the smallest country) becomes a participant in the plunder, and my duty as a representative of the revolutionary proletariat is to prepare for the *world proletarian revolution* as the *only* escape from the horrors of a world slaughter. I must argue, not from the point of view of 'my' country (for that

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The social-chauvinists (the Scheidemanns, Renaudels, Hendersons, Gompers and Co) absolutely refuse to talk about the "International" during the war. They regard the enemies of '*their*' respective bourgeoisies as "traitors" to . . . socialism. They *support* the policy of conquest pursued by *their* respective bourgeoisies. The social-pacifists (i.e., socialists in words and petty-bourgeois pacifists in practice) express all sorts of "internationalist" sentiments, protest against annexations, etc., but *in practice* they continue to *support their* respective imperialist bourgeoisies. The difference between the two types is *unimportant*: it is like the difference between two capitalists—one with bitter, and the other with sweet, words on his lips.

is the argument of a wretched, stupid, petty-bourgeois nationalist who does not realise that he is only a plaything in the hands of the imperialist bourgeoisie), but from the point of view of *my share* in the preparation, in the propaganda, and in the acceleration of the world proletarian revolution."

That is what internationalism means, and that is the duty of the internationalist, the revolutionary worker, the genuine socialist. That is the *ABC* that Kautsky the renegade has "forgotten". And his apostasy becomes still more obvious when he passes from approving the tactics of the petty-bourgeois nationalists (the Mensheviks in Russia, the Longuet supporters<sup>47</sup> in France, the Turatis in Italy, and Haase and Co. in Germany) to criticising the Bolshevik tactics. Here is his criticism:

"The Bolshevik revolution was based on the assumption that it would become the starting-point of a general European revolution, that the bold initiative of Russia would prompt the proletarians of all Europe to rise.

"On this assumption it was, of course, immaterial what forms the Russian separate peace would take, what hardships and territorial losses (literally, mutilation or maiming, *Verstümmelungen*) it would cause the Russian people, and what interpretation of the self-determination of nations it would give. At that time it was also immaterial whether Russia was able to defend herself or not. According to this view, the European revolution would be the best protection of the Russian revolution, and would bring complete and genuine self-determination to all peoples inhabiting the former Russian territory

"A revolution in Europe, which would establish and consolidate socialism there, would also become the means of removing the obstacles that would arise in Russia in the way of the introduction of the socialist system of production owing to the economic backwardness of the country.

"All this was very logical and very sound—only if the main assumption were granted, namely, that the Russian revolution would infallibly let loose a European revolution. But what if that did not happen?"

"So far the assumption has not been justified. And the proletarians of Europe are now being accused of having abandoned and betrayed the Russian revolution. This is an accusation levelled against unknown persons, for who is to be held responsible for the behaviour of the European proletariat?" (p. 28.)

And Kautsky then goes on to explain at great length that Marx, Engels and Bebel were more than once mistaken about the advent of revolution they had anticipated, but that they never based their tactics on the expectation of a revolution "*at a definite date*" (p. 29), whereas, he says, the Bolsheviks "staked everything on one card, on a general European revolution."

We have deliberately quoted this long passage to demonstrate to our readers Kautsky's "skill" in counterfeiting Marxism by palming off his banal and reactionary philistine view in its stead.

First, to ascribe to an opponent an obviously stupid idea and then to refute it is a trick practised by none too clever people. If the Bolsheviks had based their tactics on the expectation of

a revolution in other countries *by a definite date* that would have been an undeniable stupidity. But the Bolshevik Party has never been guilty of such stupidity. In my letter to American workers (August 20, 1918), I expressly disown this foolish idea by saying that we count on an American revolution, but not by any definite date.\* I dwelt at length upon the very same idea more than once in my controversy with the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries<sup>48</sup> and the "Left Communists"<sup>49</sup> (January-March 1918). Kautsky has committed a slight . . . just a very slight forgery, on which he in fact based his criticism of Bolshevism. Kautsky has confused tactics based on the expectation of a European revolution in the more or less near future, but not at a definite date, with tactics based on the expectation of a European revolution at a definite date. A slight, just a very slight forgery!

The last-named tactics are foolish. The first-named *are obligatory* for a Marxist, for every revolutionary proletarian and internationalist—*obligatory*, because they alone take into account in a proper Marxist way the objective situation brought about by the war in all European countries, and they alone conform to the international tasks of the proletariat.

By substituting the petty question about an error which the Bolshevik revolutionaries might have made, but did not, for the important question of the foundations of revolutionary tactics in general, Kautsky adroitly abjures all revolutionary tactics!

A renegade in politics, he is *unable even to present the question* of the objective prerequisites of revolutionary tactics theoretically.

And this brings us to the second point.

Secondly, it is obligatory for a Marxist to count on a European revolution if a *revolutionary situation* exists. It is the ABC of Marxism that the tactics of the socialist proletariat cannot be the same both when there is a revolutionary situation and when there is no revolutionary situation.

If Kautsky had put this question, which is obligatory for a Marxist, he would have seen that the answer was absolutely against him. Long before the war, all Marxists, all socialists were agreed that a European war would create a revolutionary situation. Kautsky himself, before he became a renegade, clearly and definitely recognised this—in 1902 (in his *Social Revolution*) and in 1909 (in his *Road to Power*). It was also admitted in the name of the entire Second International in the Basle Manifesto. No wonder the social-chauvinists and Kautsky supporters (the "Centrists", i.e., those who waver between the revolutionaries and the opportunists) of all countries shun like the plague the declarations of the Basle Manifesto on this score!

So, the expectation of a revolutionary situation in Europe was not an infatuation of the Bolsheviks, but the *general opinion* of all Marxists. When Kautsky tries to escape from this indisputable truth using such phrases as the Bolsheviks "always believed in the omnipotence of violence and will", he simply utters a sonorous and empty phrase to *cover up* his evasion, a shameful evasion, to put the question of a revolutionary situation.

To proceed. Has a revolutionary situation actually come or not? Kautsky proved unable to put this question either. The economic facts provide an answer: the famine and ruin created everywhere by the war imply a revolutionary situation. The political facts also provide an answer: ever since 1915 a splitting process has been evident in *all* countries within the old and decayed socialist parties, a process of *departure of the mass* of the proletariat from the social-chauvinist leaders to the left, to revolutionary ideas and sentiments, to revolutionary leaders.

Only a person who dreads revolution and betrays it could have failed to see these facts on August 5, 1918, when Kautsky was writing his pamphlet. And now, at the end of October 1918, the revolution is growing *in a number* of European countries, and growing under everybody's eyes and very rapidly at that. Kautsky the "revolutionary", who still wants to be regarded as a Marxist, has proved to be a short-sighted philistine, who, like those philistines of 1847 whom Marx ridiculed, failed to see the approaching revolution!

Now to the third point.

Thirdly, what should be the specific features of revolutionary tactics when there is a revolutionary situation in Europe? Having become a renegade, Kautsky feared to put this question, which is obligatory for a Marxist. Kautsky argues like a typical petty bourgeois, a philistine, or like an ignorant peasant: has a "general European revolution" begun or not? If it has, then *he too* is prepared to become a revolutionary! But then, mark you, every scoundrel (like the scoundrels who now sometimes attach themselves to the victorious Bolsheviks) would proclaim himself a revolutionary!

If it has not, then Kautsky will turn his back on revolution! Kautsky does not display a shade of understanding of the truth that a revolutionary Marxist differs from the philistine and petty bourgeois by his ability to *preach* to the uneducated masses that the maturing revolution is necessary, to *prove* that it is inevitable, to *explain* its benefits to the people, and to *prepare* the proletariat and all the working and exploited people for it.

Kautsky ascribed to the Bolsheviks an absurdity, namely, that they had staked everything on one card, on a European revolution breaking out at a definite date. This absurdity has turned against

Kautsky himself, because the logical conclusion of his argument is that the tactics of the Bolsheviks would have been correct if a European revolution had broken out by August 5, 1918! That is the date Kautsky mentions as the time he was writing his pamphlet. And when, a few weeks after this August 5, it became clear that revolution was coming in a number of European countries, the whole apostasy of Kautsky, his whole falsification of Marxism, and his utter inability to reason or even to present questions in a revolutionary manner, became revealed in all their charm!

When the proletarians of Europe are accused of treachery, Kautsky writes, it is an accusation levelled at unknown persons.

You are mistaken, Mr. Kautsky! Look in the mirror and you will see those "unknown persons" against whom this accusation is levelled. Kautsky assumes an air of naïveté and pretends not to understand *who* levelled the accusation, and its *meaning*. In reality, however, Kautsky knows perfectly well that the accusation has been and is being levelled by the German "Lefts", by the Spartacists,<sup>50</sup> by Liebknecht and his friends. This accusation expresses a *clear appreciation* of the fact that the German proletariat betrayed the Russian (and world) revolution when it strangled Finland, the Ukraine, Latvia and Estonia. This accusation is levelled primarily and above all, not against the *masses*, who are always downtrodden, but against those *leaders* who, like the Scheidemanns and the Kautskys, *failed* in their duty to carry on revolutionary agitation, revolutionary propaganda, revolutionary work among the masses to overcome their inertness, who in fact worked *against* the revolutionary instincts and aspirations which are always aglow deep down among the mass of the oppressed class. The Scheidemanns bluntly, crudely, cynically, and in most cases for selfish motives betrayed the proletariat and deserted to the side of the bourgeoisie. The Kautsky and the Longuet supporters did the same thing, only hesitatingly and haltingly, and casting cowardly side-glances at those who were stronger at the moment. In all his writings during the war Kautsky tried to *extinguish* the revolutionary spirit instead of fostering and fanning it.

The fact that Kautsky does not even understand the enormous *theoretical* importance, and the even greater agitational and propaganda importance, of the "accusation" that the proletarians of Europe have betrayed the Russian revolution will remain a veritable historical monument to the philistine stupefaction of the "average" leader of German official Social-Democracy! Kautsky does not understand that, owing to the censorship prevailing in the German "Reich", this "accusation" is perhaps the only form in which the German socialists who have not betrayed socialism—

Liebknicht and his friends—can express *their appeal to the German workers* to throw off the Scheidemanns and the Kautskys, to push aside such “leaders”, to free themselves from their stultifying and debasing propaganda, to rise in revolt *in spite of them, without them, and march over their heads towards revolution!*

Kautsky does not understand this. And how could he understand the tactics of the Bolsheviks? Can a man who renounces revolution in general be expected to weigh and appraise the conditions of the development of revolution in one of the most “difficult” cases?

The Bolsheviks’ tactics were correct; they were the *only* internationalist tactics, because they were based, not on the cowardly fear of a world revolution, not on a philistine “lack of faith” in it, not on the narrow nationalist desire to protect one’s “own” fatherland (the fatherland of one’s own bourgeoisie), while not “giving a damn” about all the rest, but on a correct (and, before the war and before the apostasy of the social-chauvinists and social-pacifists, a universally accepted) *estimation* of the revolutionary situation in Europe. These tactics were the only internationalist tactics, because they did the utmost possible in one country *for* the development, support and awakening of the revolution *in all countries*. These tactics have been justified by their enormous success, for Bolshevism (not by any means because of the merits of the Russian Bolsheviks, but because of the most profound sympathy of the *people* everywhere for tactics that are revolutionary in practice) has become *world* Bolshevism, has produced an idea, a theory, a programme and tactics which differ concretely and in practice from those of social-chauvinism and social-pacifism. Bolshevism *has given a coup de grâce* to the old, decayed International of the Scheidemanns and Kautskys, Renaudels and Longuets, Hendersons and MacDonalds, who from now on will be treading on each other’s feet, dreaming about “unity” and trying to revive a corpse. Bolshevism *has created* the ideological and tactical foundations of a Third International, of a really proletarian and Communist International, which will take into consideration both the gains of the tranquil epoch and the experience of the *epoch of revolutions, which has begun*.

Bolshevism has popularised throughout the world the idea of the “dictatorship of the proletariat”, has translated these words from the Latin, first into Russian, and then into *all* the languages of the world, and has shown by the example of *Soviet government* that the workers and poor peasants, *even* of a backward country, even with the least experience, education and habits of organisation, *have been able* for a whole year, amidst gigantic difficulties and amidst a struggle against the exploiters (who were supported by the bourgeoisie of the *whole* world), to maintain the

power of the working people, to create a democracy that is immeasurably higher and broader than all previous democracies in the world, and to *start* the creative work of tens of millions of workers and peasants for the practical construction of socialism.

Bolshevism has actually helped to develop the proletarian revolution in Europe and America more powerfully than any party in any other country has so far succeeded in doing. While the workers of the whole world are realising more and more clearly every day that the tactics of the Scheidemanns and Kautskys have not delivered them from the imperialist war and from wage-slavery to the imperialist bourgeoisie, and that these tactics cannot serve as a model for all countries, the mass of workers in all countries are realising more and more clearly every day that Bolshevism has indicated the right road of escape from the horrors of war and imperialism, that Bolshevism *can serve as a model of tactics for all*.

Not only the general European, but the world proletarian revolution is maturing before the eyes of all, and it has been assisted, accelerated and supported by the victory of the proletariat in Russia. All this is not enough for the complete victory of socialism, you say? Of course it is not enough. One country alone cannot do more. But this one country, thanks to Soviet government, has done so much that even if Soviet government in Russia were to be crushed by world imperialism tomorrow, as a result, let us say, of an agreement between German and Anglo-French imperialism—even granted that very worst possibility—it would still be found that Bolshevik tactics have brought enormous benefit to socialism and have assisted the growth of the invincible world revolution.

### **SUBSERVIENCE TO THE BOURGEOISIE IN THE GUISE OF "ECONOMIC ANALYSIS"**

As has already been said, if the title of Kautsky's book were properly to reflect its contents, it should have been called, not *The Dictatorship of the Proletariat*, but *A Rehash of Bourgeois Attacks on the Bolsheviks*.

The old Menshevik "theories" about the bourgeois character of the Russian revolution, i.e., the old distortion of Marxism by the Mensheviks (*rejected* by Kautsky in 1905) are now once again being rehashed by our theoretician. We must deal with this question, however boring it may be for Russian Marxists.

The Russian revolution is a bourgeois revolution, said all the Marxists of Russia before 1905. The Mensheviks, substituting liberalism for Marxism, drew the following conclusion from this:

the proletariat therefore must not go beyond what is acceptable to the bourgeoisie and must pursue a policy of compromise with them. The Bolsheviks said this was a bourgeois-liberal theory. The bourgeoisie were trying to bring about the reform of the state on bourgeois, *reformist*, not revolutionary lines, while preserving the monarchy, the landlord system, etc., as far as possible. The proletariat must carry through the bourgeois-democratic revolution to the end, not allowing itself to be "bound" by the reformism of the bourgeoisie. The Bolsheviks formulated the alignment of *class* forces in the bourgeois revolution as follows; the proletariat, winning over the peasants, will neutralise the liberal bourgeoisie and utterly destroy the monarchy, medievalism and the landlord system.

It is the alliance between the proletariat and the peasants *in general* that reveals the bourgeois character of the revolution, for the peasants in general are small producers who exist on the basis of commodity production. Further, the Bolsheviks then added, the proletariat will win over *the entire semi-proletariat* (all the working and exploited people), will neutralise the middle peasants and *overthrow* the bourgeoisie; this will be a socialist revolution, as distinct from a bourgeois-democratic revolution. (See my pamphlet *Two Tactics*,\* published in 1905 and reprinted in *Twelve Years*, St. Petersburg, 1907.)

Kautsky took an indirect part in this controversy in 1905,<sup>51</sup> when, in reply to an inquiry by the then Menshevik Plekhanov, he expressed an opinion that was essentially *against* Plekhanov, which provoked particular ridicule in the Bolshevik press at the time. But now Kautsky does *not* say *a single word* about the controversies of that time (for fear of being exposed by his own statements!), and thereby makes it utterly impossible for the German reader to understand the essence of the matter. Mr. Kautsky *could not* tell the German workers in 1918 that in 1905 he had been in favour of an alliance of the workers with the peasants and not with the liberal bourgeoisie, and on what conditions he had advocated this alliance, and what programme he had outlined for it.

Backing out from his old position, Kautsky, under the guise of an "economic analysis", and talking proudly about "historical materialism", now advocates the subordination of the workers to the bourgeoisie, and, with the aid of quotations from the Menshevik Maslov, chews over the old liberal views of the Mensheviks. Quotations are used to prove the new idea of the backwardness of Russia. But the deduction drawn from this new idea is the old one, that in a bourgeois revolution one must not go farther

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\* See present edition, Vol. 1, pp. 425-527.—*Ed.*



than the bourgeoisie! And this in spite of all that Marx and Engels said when comparing the bourgeois revolution of 1789-93 in France with the bourgeois revolution of 1848 in Germany!<sup>52</sup>

Before passing to the chief "argument" and the main content of Kautsky's "economic analysis", let us note that Kautsky's very first sentences reveal a curious confusion, or superficiality, of thought.

"Agriculture, and specifically small peasant farming," our "theoretician" announces, "to this day represents the economic foundation of Russia. About four-fifths, perhaps even five-sixths, of the population live by it" (p. 45). First of all, my dear theoretician, have you considered how many exploiters there may be among this mass of small producers? Certainly not more than one-tenth of the total, and in the towns still less, for there large-scale production is more highly developed. Take even an incredibly high figure; assume that one-fifth of the small producers are exploiters who are deprived of the franchise. Even then you will find that the 66 per cent of the votes held by the Bolsheviks at the Fifth Congress of Soviets represented the *majority of the population*. To this it must be added that there was always a considerable section of the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries who were in favour of Soviet power—in principle *all* the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries were in favour of Soviet power, and when a section of them, in July 1918, started an adventurous revolt, two new parties split away from the old party, namely, the "Narodnik Communists"<sup>53</sup> and the "Revolutionary Communists" (of the prominent Left Socialist-Revolutionaries who had been nominated for important posts in the government by the old party, to the first-mentioned belongs Zax, for instance, and to the second Kolegayev). So, Kautsky has himself—inadvertently—refused the ridiculous fable that the Bolsheviks only have the backing of a minority of the population.

Secondly, my dear theoretician, have you considered the fact that the small peasant producer *inevitably* vacillates between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie? This Marxist truth, which has been confirmed by the whole modern history of Europe, Kautsky very conveniently "forgot", for it simply demolishes the Menshevik "theory" that he keeps repeating! Had Kautsky not "forgotten" this he could not have denied the need for a proletarian dictatorship in a country in which the small peasant producers predominate.

Let us examine the main content of our theoretician's "economic analysis".

That Soviet power is a dictatorship cannot be disputed, says Kautsky. "But is it a dictatorship of the *proletariat*?" (P. 34.)

"According to the Soviet Constitution, the peasants form the majority of the population entitled to participate in legislation and administration. What

is presented to us as a dictatorship of the *proletariat* would prove to be—if carried out consistently, and if, generally speaking, a class could directly exercise a dictatorship, which in reality can only be exercised by a party—a dictatorship of the *peasants*" (p. 35).

And, highly elated over so profound and clever an argument, our good Kautsky tries to be witty and says: "It would appear, therefore, that the most painless achievement of socialism is best assured when it is put in the hands of the peasants" (p. 35).

In the greatest detail, and citing a number of extremely learned quotations from the semi-liberal Maslov, our theoretician labours to prove the new idea that the peasants are interested in high grain prices, in low wages for the urban workers, etc., etc. Incidentally, the enunciation of these new ideas is the more tedious the less attention our author pays to the really new features of the post-war period—for example, that the peasants demand for their grain, not money, but goods, and that they have not enough agricultural implements, which cannot be obtained in sufficient quantities for any amount of money. But more of this later.

Thus, Kautsky charges the Bolsheviks, the party of the proletariat, with having surrendered the dictatorship, the work of achieving socialism, to the petty-bourgeois peasants. Excellent, Mr. Kautsky! But what, in your enlightened opinion, should have been the attitude of the proletarian party towards the petty-bourgeois peasants?

Our theoretician preferred to say nothing on this score—evidently bearing in mind the proverb: "Speech is silver, silence is gold." But he gives himself away by the following argument:

"At the beginning of the Soviet Republic, the peasants' Soviets were organisations of the *peasants* in general. Now this Republic proclaims that the Soviets are organisations of the proletarians and the *poor* peasants. The well-to-do peasants are deprived of the suffrage in the elections to the Soviets. The poor peasant is here recognised to be a permanent and mass product of the socialist agrarian reform under the 'dictatorship of the proletariat'" (p. 48).

What deadly irony! It is the kind that may be heard in Russia from any bourgeois: they all jeer and gloat over the fact that the Soviet Republic openly admits the existence of poor peasants. They ridicule socialism. That is their right. But a "socialist" who jeers at the fact that after four years of a most ruinous war there remain (and will remain for a long time) poor peasants in Russia—such a "socialist" could only have been born at a time of wholesale apostasy.

And further:

"...The Soviet Republic interferes in the relations between the rich and poor peasants, but not by redistributing the land. In order to relieve the bread shortage in the towns, detachments of armed workers are sent into the

countryside to take away the rich peasants' surplus stocks of grain. Part of that stock is given to the urban population, the other—to the poorer peasants" (p. 48).

Of course, Kautsky the socialist and Marxist is profoundly indignant at the idea that such a measure should be extended beyond the environs of the large towns (and we have extended it to the whole of the country). With the matchless, incomparable and admirable coolness (or pigheadedness) of a philistine, Kautsky the socialist and Marxist sermonises: . . . "It [the expropriation of the well-to-do peasants] introduces a new element of unrest and civil war into the process of production" . . . (civil war introduced into the "process of production"—that is something supernatural!) . . . "which stands in urgent need of peace and security for its recovery" (p. 49).

Oh, yes, of course, Kautsky the Marxist and socialist must sigh and shed tears over the subject of peace and security for the exploiters and grain profiteers who hoard their surplus stocks, sabotage the grain monopoly law, and reduce the urban population to famine. "We are all socialists and Marxists and internationalists," the Kautskys, Heinrich Webers (Vienna), Longuets (Paris), MacDonalds (London), etc., sing in chorus. "We are all in favour of a working-class revolution. Only . . . only we would like a revolution that does not infringe upon the peace and security of the grain profiteers! And we camouflage this sordid subservience to the capitalists by a 'Marxist' reference to the 'process of production' . . ." If this is Marxism, what is servility to the bourgeoisie?

Just see what our theoretician arrives at. He accuses the Bolsheviks of presenting the dictatorship of the peasants as the dictatorship of the proletariat. But at the same time he accuses us of introducing civil war into the rural districts (which we think is to our *credit*), of dispatching into the countryside armed detachments of workers, who publicly proclaim that they are exercising the "dictatorship of the proletariat and the poor peasants", assist the latter and confiscate from the profiteers and the rich peasants the surplus stocks of grain which they are hoarding in contravention of the grain monopoly law.

On the one hand, our Marxist theoretician stands for pure democracy, for the subordination of the revolutionary class, the leader of the working and exploited people, to the majority of the population (including, therefore, the exploiters). On the other hand, as an argument *against* us, he explains that the revolution must inevitably bear a bourgeois character—bourgeois, because the life of the peasants as a whole is based on bourgeois social relations—and at the same time he pretends to uphold the proletarian, class, Marxist point of view!

Instead of an "economic analysis" we have a first-class hodge-podge. Instead of Marxism we have fragments of liberal doctrines and the preaching of servility to the bourgeoisie and the kulaks.

The question which Kautsky has so tangled up was fully explained by the Bolsheviks as far back as 1905. Yes, our revolution is a bourgeois revolution *as long* as we march *with* the peasants *as a whole*. This has been as clear as clear can be to us; we have said it hundreds and thousands of times since 1905, and we have never attempted to skip this necessary stage of the historical process or abolish it by decrees. Kautsky's efforts to "expose" us on this point merely expose his own confusion of mind and his fear to recall what he wrote in 1905, when he was not yet a renegade.

Beginning with *April* 1917, however, long before the October Revolution, that is, long before we assumed power, we publicly declared and explained to the people: the revolution cannot now stop at this stage, for the country has marched forward, capitalism has advanced, ruin has reached fantastic dimensions, which (whether one likes it or not) *will demand* steps forward, *to socialism*. For there is *no* other way of advancing, of saving the war-weary country and of *alleviating* the sufferings of the working and exploited people.

Things have turned out just as we said they would. The course taken by the revolution has confirmed the correctness of our reasoning. *First*, with the "whole" of the peasants against the monarchy, against the landowners, against medievalism (and to that extent the revolution remains bourgeois, bourgeois-democratic). *Then*, with the poor peasants, with the semi-proletarians, with all the exploited, *against capitalism*, including the rural rich, the kulaks, the profiteers, and to that extent the revolution becomes a *socialist* one. To attempt to raise an artificial Chinese Wall between the first and second, to separate them *by anything else* than the degree of preparedness of the proletariat and the degree of its unity with the poor peasants, means to distort Marxism dreadfully, to vulgarise it, to substitute liberalism in its place. It means smuggling in a reactionary defence of the bourgeoisie against the socialist proletariat by means of quasi-scientific references to the progressive character of the bourgeoisie in comparison with medievalism.

Incidentally, the Soviets represent an immensely higher form and type of democracy just because, by uniting and drawing the *mass of workers and peasants* into political life, they serve as a most sensitive barometer, the one closest to the "people" (in the sense in which Marx, in 1871, spoke of a real people's revolution<sup>54</sup>) of the growth and development of the political, class maturity of the people. The Soviet Constitution was not drawn up accord-

ing to some "plan"; it was not drawn up in a study, and was not foisted on the working people by bourgeois lawyers. No, this Constitution *grew up* in the course of the development of *the class struggle* in proportion as *class antagonisms* matured. The very facts which Kautsky himself has to admit prove this.

At first, the Soviets embraced the peasants as a whole. It was owing to the immaturity, the backwardness, the ignorance of the poor peasants that the leadership passed into the hands of the kulaks, the rich, the capitalists and the petty-bourgeois intellectuals. That was the period of the domination of the petty bourgeoisie, of the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries (only fools or renegades like Kautsky can regard either of these as socialists). The petty bourgeoisie inevitably and unavoidably vacillated between the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie (Kerensky, Kornilov, Savinkov) and the dictatorship of the proletariat; for owing to the basic features of its economic position, the petty bourgeoisie is incapable of doing anything independently. Kautsky, by the way, completely renounces Marxism by confining himself in his analysis of the Russian revolution to the legal and formal concept of "democracy", which serves the bourgeoisie as a screen to conceal their domination and as a means of deceiving the people, and by *forgetting* that in practice "democracy" sometimes stands for the *dictatorship of the bourgeoisie*, sometimes for the impotent reformism of the petty bourgeoisie who submit to that dictatorship, and so on. According to Kautsky, in a capitalist country there were bourgeois parties and there was a proletarian party (the Bolsheviks), which led the majority, the mass of the proletariat, but *there were no* petty-bourgeois parties!

The Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries had no *class roots*, no petty-bourgeois roots!

The vacillations of the petty bourgeoisie, of the Mensheviks and the Socialist-Revolutionaries, helped to enlighten the people and to repel the overwhelming majority of them, all the "lower sections", all the proletarians and semi-proletarians, from such "leaders". The Bolsheviks won predominance in the Soviets (in Petrograd and Moscow by October 1917); the split among the Socialist-Revolutionaries and the Mensheviks became more pronounced.

The victorious Bolshevik revolution meant the end of vacillation, meant the complete destruction of the monarchy and of the landlord system (which had *not* been destroyed before the October Revolution). We carried the *bourgeois* revolution to its *conclusion*. The peasants supported us *as a whole*. Their antagonism to the socialist proletariat could not reveal itself all at once. The Soviets united the peasants *in general*. The class divisions

among the peasants had not yet matured, had not yet come into the open.

*That* process took place in the summer and autumn of 1918. The Czech counter-revolutionary mutiny roused the kulaks. A wave of kulak revolts swept over Russia. The poor peasants learned, not from books or newspapers, *but from life itself*, that their interests were irreconcilably antagonistic to those of the kulaks, the rich, the rural bourgeoisie. Like every other petty-bourgeois party, the "Left Socialist-Revolutionaries" reflected the vacillation of the people, and in the summer of 1918 they split: one section joined forces with the Czechs (the rebellion in Moscow, when Prosyanyan, having seized the Telegraph Office—for one hour!—announced to Russia that the Bolsheviks had been overthrown; then the treachery of Muravyov, Commander-in-Chief of the army that was fighting the Czechs, etc.), while the other section, that mentioned above, remained with the Bolsheviks.

The growing food shortage in the towns lent increasing urgency to the question of the grain monopoly (this Kautsky the theoretician completely "forgot" in his economic analysis, which is a mere repetition of platitudes gleaned ten years ago from Maslov's writings!).

The old landowner and bourgeois, and even democratic-republican, state had sent to the rural districts armed detachments which were practically at the beck and call of the bourgeoisie. Mr. Kautsky does not know this! He does not regard that as the "dictatorship of the bourgeoisie"—Heaven forbid! That is "pure democracy", especially if endorsed by a bourgeois parliament! Nor has Kautsky "heard" that, in the summer and autumn of 1917, Avksentyev and S. Maslov, in company with the Kerenskys, the Tseretelis and other Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks, arrested members of the Land Committees; he does not say a word about that!

The whole point is that a bourgeois state which is exercising the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie through a democratic republic cannot confess to the people that it is serving the bourgeoisie; it cannot tell the truth, and has to play the hypocrite.

But the state of the Paris Commune type, the Soviet state, openly and frankly tells the people the *truth* and declares that it is the dictatorship of the proletariat and the poor peasants: and by this truth it wins over scores and scores of millions of new citizens who are kept down in any democratic republic, but who are drawn by the Soviets into political life, *into democracy*, into the administration of the state. The Soviet Republic sends into the rural districts detachments of armed workers, primarily the more advanced, from the capitals. These workers carry socialism into the countryside, win over the poor, organise and enlighten

them, and help them to *suppress the resistance of the bourgeoisie*.

All who are familiar with the situation and have been in the rural districts declare that it is only now, in the summer and autumn of 1918, that the rural districts *themselves* are passing through the "October" (i.e., proletarian) Revolution. Things are beginning to change. The wave of kulak revolts is giving way to a rise of the poor, to a growth of the "Poor Peasants' Committees".<sup>55</sup> In the army, the number of workers who become commissars, officers and commanders of divisions and armies is increasing. And at the very time that the simple-minded Kautsky, frightened by the July (1918) crisis<sup>56</sup> and the lamentations of the bourgeoisie, was running after the latter like a cockerel, and writing a whole pamphlet breathing the conviction that the Bolsheviks are on the eve of being overthrown by the peasants; at the very time that this simpleton regarded the secession of the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries as a "narrowing" (p. 37) of the circle of those who support the Bolsheviks—at that very time the *real* circle of supporters of Bolshevism was *expanding enormously*, because scores and scores of millions of the village poor were freeing themselves from the tutelage and influence of the kulaks and village bourgeoisie and were awakening to *independent* political life.

We have lost hundreds of Left Socialist-Revolutionaries, spineless intellectuals and kulaks from among the peasants; but we have gained millions of poor people.\*

A year after the proletarian revolution in the capitals, and under its influence and with its assistance, the proletarian revolution began in the remote rural districts, and it has finally consolidated the power of the Soviets and Bolshevism, and has finally proved there is no force in the country that can withstand it.

Having completed the bourgeois-democratic revolution in alliance with the peasants as a whole, the Russian proletariat finally passed on to the socialist revolution when it succeeded in splitting the rural population, in winning over the rural proletarians and semi-proletarians, and in uniting them against the kulaks and the bourgeoisie, including the peasant bourgeoisie.

Now, if the Bolshevik proletariat in the capitals and large industrial centres had not been able to rally the village poor around itself against the rich peasants, this would indeed have proved that Russia was "unripe" for socialist revolution. The peasants would then have remained an "integral whole", i.e.,

\* At the Sixth Congress of Soviets (November 6-9, 1918), there were 967 voting delegates, 950 of whom were Bolsheviks, and 351 delegates with voice but no vote, of whom 335 were Bolsheviks, i.e., 97 per cent of the total number of delegates were Bolsheviks.

they would have remained under the economic, political, and moral leadership of the kulaks, the rich, the bourgeoisie, and the revolution would not have passed beyond the limits of a bourgeois-democratic revolution. (But, let it be said in parenthesis, even if this had been the case, it would not have proved that the proletariat should not have taken power, for it is the proletariat alone that has really carried the bourgeois-democratic revolution to its conclusion, it is the proletariat alone that has done something really important to bring nearer the world proletarian revolution, and the proletariat alone that has created the Soviet state, which, after the Paris Commune, is the second step towards the socialist state.)

On the other hand, if the Bolshevik proletariat had tried at once, in October-November 1917, without waiting for the class differentiation in the rural districts, without being able to *prepare* it and bring it about, to "decree" a civil war or the "introduction of socialism" in the rural districts, had tried to do without a temporary bloc with the peasants in general, without making a number of concessions to the middle peasants, etc., that would have been a *Blanquist*<sup>57</sup> distortion of Marxism, an attempt by the *minority* to impose its will upon the majority; it would have been a theoretical absurdity, revealing a failure to understand that a general peasant revolution is *still* a bourgeois revolution, and that *without a series of transitions, of transitional stages*, it cannot be transformed into a socialist revolution in a backward country.

Kautsky has confused *everything* in this very important theoretical and political problem, and has, in practice, proved to be nothing but a servant of the bourgeoisie, howling against the dictatorship of the proletariat.

\* \* \*

Kautsky has introduced a similar, if not greater, confusion into another extremely interesting and important question, namely: was the *legislative* activity of the Soviet Republic in the sphere of agrarian reform—that most difficult and yet most important of socialist reforms—based on sound principles and then properly carried out? We should be boundlessly grateful to any West-European Marxist who, after studying at least the most important documents, gave a *criticism* of our policy, because he would thereby help us immensely, and would also help the revolution that is maturing throughout the world. But instead of criticism Kautsky produces an incredible theoretical muddle, which converts Marxism into liberalism and which, in practice, is a series of idle, venomous, vulgar sallies against the Bolsheviks. Let the reader judge for himself:



"Large landed estates could not be preserved. This was a result of the revolution. That was at once clear. The transfer of the large estates to the peasant population became inevitable..." (That is not true, Mr. Kautsky. You substitute what is "clear" to you for the attitude of the different *classes* towards the question. The history of the revolution has shown that the coalition government of the bourgeois and the petty bourgeois, the Mensheviks and the Socialist-Revolutionaries, pursued a policy of preserving big landownership. This was proved particularly by S. Maslov's bill and by the arrest of the members of the Land Committees.<sup>58</sup> Without the dictatorship of the proletariat, the "peasant population" would not have vanquished the landowners, who had joined forces with the capitalists.)

"... But as to the forms in which it was to take place, there was no unity. Various solutions were conceivable..." (Kautsky is most of all concerned about the "unity" of the "socialists", no matter who called themselves by that name. He forgets that the principal classes in capitalist society are bound to arrive at different solutions.) "... From the socialist point of view, the most rational solution would have been to convert the large estates into state property and to allow the peasants who hitherto had been employed on them as wage-labourers to cultivate them in the form of co-operative societies. But such a solution presupposes the existence of a type of farm labourer that did not exist in Russia. Another solution would have been to convert the large estates into state property and to divide them up into small plots to be rented out to peasants who owned little land. Had that been done, at least something socialistic would have been achieved..."

As usual Kautsky confines himself to the celebrated: on the one hand it cannot but be admitted, and on the other hand it must be confessed. He places different solutions *side by side* without a thought—the only realistic and Marxist thought—as to what must be the *transitional stages* from capitalism to communism in such-and-such *specific* conditions. There are farm labourers in Russia, but not many; and Kautsky did not touch on the question—which the Soviet government *did raise*—of the method of transition to a communal and co-operative form of land cultivation. The most curious thing, however, is that Kautsky claims to see "something socialistic" in the renting out of small plots of land. In reality, this is a *petty-bourgeois* slogan, and there is *nothing* "socialistic" in it. If the "state" that rents out the land is *not* a state of the Paris Commune type, but a parliamentary bourgeois republic (and that is exactly Kautsky's constant assumption), the renting of land in small plots is a typical *liberal reform*.

Kautsky says nothing about the Soviet government having abolished *all* private ownership of land. Worse than that: he resorts to an incredible forgery and quotes the decrees of the Soviet government in such a way as to omit the most essential.

After stating that "small production strives for complete private ownership of the means of production", and that the Constituent Assembly would have been the "only authority" capable of preventing the dividing up of the land (an assertion which will evoke laughter in Russia, where everybody knows that the Soviets *alone* are recognised as authoritative by the workers and peasants, while the Constituent Assembly has become the slogan of the Czechs and the landowners), Kautsky continues:

"One of the first decrees of the Soviet Government declared that: (1) Landed proprietorship is abolished forthwith without any compensation. (2) The landed estates, as also all crown, monastery and church lands, with all their livestock, implements, buildings and everything pertaining thereto, shall be placed at the disposal of the volost Land Committees of the uyezd Soviets of Peasants' Deputies pending the settlement of the land question by the Constituent Assembly."

Having quoted *only these two clauses*, Kautsky concludes:

"The reference to the Constituent Assembly has remained a dead letter. In point of fact, the peasants in the separate volosts could do as they pleased with the land" (p. 47).

Here you have an example of Kautsky's "criticism"! Here you have a "scientific" work which is more like a fraud. The German reader is induced to believe that the Bolsheviks capitulated before the peasants on the question of private ownership of land, that the Bolsheviks permitted the peasants to act locally ("in the separate volosts") in whatever way they pleased!

But in reality, the decree Kautsky quotes—the first to be promulgated, on October 26, 1917 (old style)\*—consists not of two, but of five clauses, *plus* eight clauses of the Mandate,<sup>59</sup> which, it was expressly stated, "shall serve as a guide".

Clause 3 of the decree states that the estates are transferred "*to the people*", and the "exact inventories of all property confiscated" shall be drawn up and the property "protected in the strictest revolutionary way". And the Mandate declares that "private ownership of land shall be abolished for ever", that "lands on which high-level scientific farming is practised . . . *shall not be divided up*", that "all livestock and farm implements of the confiscated estates shall pass into the exclusive use of the state or a commune, depending on size and importance, and no compensation shall be paid for this", and that "all land shall become part of the national land fund".

Further, simultaneously with the dissolution of the Constituent

\* See present edition, Vol. 2, pp. 425-29.—*Ed.*

Assembly (January 5, 1918), the Third Congress of Soviets adopted the *Declaration of Rights* of the Working and Exploited People,\* which now forms part of the Fundamental Law of the Soviet Republic. Article 2, paragraph 1 of this Declaration states that "private ownership of land is hereby abolished", and that "model estates and agricultural enterprises are proclaimed national property".

So, the reference to the Constituent Assembly did *not* remain a dead letter, because another national representative body, immeasurably more authoritative in the eyes of the peasants, took upon itself the solution of the agrarian problem.

Again, on February 6 (19), 1918, the land socialisation law was promulgated, which once more confirmed the abolition of all private ownership of land, and placed the land and *all private* stock and implements at the disposal of the Soviet authorities *under the control of the federal Soviet government*. Among the duties connected with the disposal of the land, the law prescribed:

"the development of collective farming as more advantageous from the point of view of economy of labour and produce, at the expense of individual farming, with a view to transition to socialist farming" (Article 11, paragraph c).

The same law, in establishing the principle of *equal* land tenure, replied to the fundamental question: "Who has a right to the use of the land?" in the following manner:

(Article 20) "Plots of land surface within the borders of the Russian Soviet Federative Republic may be used for public and private needs. A. For cultural and educational purposes: (1) by the state as represented by the organs of Soviet power (federal, as well as in regions, gubernias uyezds, volosts, and villages), and (2) by public bodies (under the control, and with the permission, of the local Soviet authorities); B. For agricultural purposes: (3) by agricultural communes, (4) by agricultural co-operative societies, (5) by village communities, (6) by individual families and persons . . ."

The reader will see that Kautsky has completely distorted the facts, and has given the German reader an absolutely false view of the agrarian policy and agrarian legislation of the proletarian state in Russia.

Kautsky proved even unable to formulate the theoretically important fundamental questions!

These questions are:

(1) Equal land tenure and  
(2) Nationalisation of the land—the relation of these two measures to socialism in general, and to the transition from capitalism to communism in particular.

(3) Farming in common as a transition from small scattered farming to large-scale collective farming; does the manner in

\* See present edition, Vol. 2, pp. 475-77.—Ed.

which this question is dealt with in Soviet legislation meet the requirements of socialism?

On the first question it is necessary, first of all, to establish the following two fundamental facts: (a) in reviewing the experience of 1905 (I may refer, for instance, to my work on the agrarian problem in the First Russian Revolution<sup>60</sup>), the Bolsheviks pointed to the democratically progressive, the democratically revolutionary meaning of the slogan "equal land tenure", and in 1917, *before* the October Revolution, they spoke of this quite definitely; (b) when enforcing the land socialisation law—the "spirit" of which is equal land tenure—the Bolsheviks most explicitly and definitely declared: this is not our idea, we do not agree with this slogan, but we think it our duty to enforce it because this is the demand of the overwhelming majority of the peasants. And the idea and demands of the majority of the working people are things that the working people must *discard of their own accord*: such demands cannot be either "abolished" or "skipped over". We Bolsheviks shall *help* the peasants to discard petty-bourgeois slogans, to *pass* from them as quickly and as easily as possible to socialist slogans.

A Marxist theoretician who wanted to help the working-class revolution by his scientific analysis should have answered the following questions: first, is it true that the idea of equal land tenure has a democratically revolutionary meaning of carrying the *bourgeois*-democratic revolution to its conclusion? Secondly, did the Bolsheviks act rightly in helping to pass by their votes (and in most loyally observing) the petty-bourgeois equal land tenure law?

Kautsky failed even to *perceive* what, theoretically, was the crux of the problem!

Kautsky will never be able to refute the view that the idea of equal land tenure has a progressive and revolutionary value in the bourgeois-democratic revolution. Such a revolution cannot go beyond this. By reaching its limit, it *all the more clearly, rapidly and easily* reveals to the people the *inadequacy* of bourgeois-democratic solutions and the necessity of proceeding beyond their limits, of passing on to *socialism*.

The peasants, who have overthrown tsarism and the landowners, dream of equal land tenure, and no power on earth could have stopped the peasants, once they had been freed both from the landowners and from the *bourgeois* parliamentary republican state. The workers say to the peasants: We shall help you reach "ideal" capitalism, for equal land tenure is the idealisation of capitalism by the small producer. At the same time we shall prove to you its inadequacy and the necessity of passing to farming in common.

It would be interesting to see Kautsky's attempt to disprove that

*this kind of leadership of the peasant struggle by the proletariat was right.*

Kautsky, however, preferred to evade the question altogether. . . .

Next, Kautsky deliberately deceived his German readers by withholding from them the fact that in its *land law* the Soviet government gave *direct* preference to communes and co-operative societies.

With all the peasants right through to the end of the bourgeois-democratic revolution; and with the poor, the proletarian and semi-proletarian section of the peasants, forward to the socialist revolution! That has been the policy of the Bolsheviks, and it is the only Marxist policy.

But Kautsky is all muddled and incapable of formulating a single question! On the one hand, he *dare not* say that the workers should have parted company with the peasants over the question of equal land tenure, for he realises that it would have been absurd (and, moreover, in 1905, when he was not yet a renegade, he himself clearly and explicitly advocated an alliance between the workers and peasants as a condition for the victory of the revolution). On the other hand, he sympathetically quotes the liberal platitudes of the Menshevik Maslov, who "proves" that petty-bourgeois equal land tenure is utopian and reactionary *from the point of view of socialism*, but hushes up the progressive and revolutionary character of the petty-bourgeois struggle for equality and equal tenure *from the point of view of the bourgeois-democratic revolution*.

Kautsky is in a hopeless muddle: note that he (in 1918) *insists* on the *bourgeois* character of the Russian revolution. He (in 1918) peremptorily says: Don't go beyond these limits! Yet this very same Kautsky sees "something *socialistic*" (for a *bourgeois* revolution) in the *petty-bourgeois* reform of renting out small plots of land to the *poor* peasants (which is an approximation to equal land tenure)!

Understand this if you can!

In addition to all this, Kautsky displays a philistine inability to take into account the real policy of a definite party. He quotes the empty *phrases* of the Menshevik Maslov and *refuses to see the real* policy the Menshevik Party pursued in 1917, when, in "coalition" with the landowners and Cadets, they advocated what was virtually a *liberal agrarian reform and compromise with the landowners* (proof: the arrest of the members of the Land Committees and S. Maslov's land bill).

Kautsky failed to notice that P. Maslov's phrases about the reactionary and utopian character of petty-bourgeois equality are really a screen to conceal the Menshevik policy of *compromise* between the peasants and the landowners (i.e., of supporting the

landowners in duping the peasants), instead of the *revolutionary* overthrow of the landowners by the peasants.

What a "Marxist" Kautsky is!

It was the Bolsheviks who strictly differentiated between the bourgeois-democratic revolution and the socialist revolution: by carrying the former through, they opened the door for the transition to the latter. This was the only policy that was revolutionary and Marxist.

It would have been wiser for Kautsky not to repeat the feeble liberal witticism: "Never yet have the small peasants anywhere adopted collective farming under the influence of theoretical convictions" (p. 50).

How very smart!

But never as yet and nowhere have the small peasants of any large country been under the influence of a proletarian state.

Never as yet and nowhere have the small peasants engaged in an open class struggle reaching the extent of a civil war between the poor peasants and the rich peasants, *with* propagandist, political, economic and military support given to the poor by a proletarian state.

Never as yet and nowhere have the profiteers and the rich amassed such wealth out of war, while the mass of peasants have been so utterly ruined.

Kautsky just reiterates the old stuff, he just chews the old cud, afraid even to give thought to the new tasks of the proletarian dictatorship.

But what, dear Kautsky, if the peasants *lack* implements for small-scale farming and the proletarian state *helps* them to obtain machines for collective farming—is that a "theoretical conviction"?

We shall now pass to the question of nationalisation of the land. Our Narodniks, including all the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries, deny that the measure we have adopted is nationalisation of the land. They are wrong in theory. Insofar as we remain within the framework of commodity production and capitalism, the abolition of private ownership of land is nationalisation of the land. The term "socialisation" merely expresses a tendency, a desire, the preparation for the transition to socialism.

What should be the attitude of Marxists towards nationalisation of the land?

Here, too, Kautsky fails ever to formulate the theoretical question, or, which is still worse, he deliberately evades it, although one knows from Russian literature that Kautsky is aware of the old controversies among the Russian Marxists on the question of nationalisation, municipalisation (i.e., the transfer of the large estates to the local self-government authorities). or division of the land.

Kautsky's assertion that to transfer the large estates to the state and rent them out in small plots to peasants who own little land would be achieving "something socialistic" is a downright mockery of Marxism. We have already shown that there is nothing socialistic about it. But that is not all; it would not even be carrying the *bourgeois-democratic* revolution to its conclusion. Kautsky's great misfortune is that he placed his trust in the Mensheviks. Hence the curious position that while insisting on our revolution having a bourgeois character and reproaching the Bolsheviks for taking it into their heads to proceed to socialism, he *himself* proposes a liberal reform under the guise of socialism, *without carrying this reform* to the point of completely clearing away all the survivals of medievalism in agrarian relations! The arguments of Kautsky, as of his Menshevik advisers, amount to a defence of the liberal bourgeoisie, who fear revolution, instead of defence of consistent bourgeois-democratic revolution.

Indeed, why should only the large estates, and not all the land, be converted into state property? The liberal bourgeoisie thereby achieve the maximum preservation of the old conditions (i.e., the least consistency in revolution) and the maximum facility for a reversion to the old conditions. The radical bourgeoisie, i.e., the bourgeoisie that want to carry the bourgeois revolution to its conclusion, put forward the slogan of *nationalisation of the land*.

Kautsky, who in the dim and distant past, some twenty years ago, wrote an excellent Marxist work on the agrarian question, cannot but know that Marx declared that land nationalisation is in fact a *consistent* slogan of the *bourgeoisie*.<sup>61</sup> Kautsky cannot but be aware of Marx's controversy with Rodbertus, and Marx's remarkable passages in his *Theories of Surplus Value* where the revolutionary significance—in the bourgeois-democratic sense—of land nationalisation is explained with particular clarity.

The Menshevik P. Maslov, whom Kautsky, unfortunately for himself, chose as an adviser, denied that the Russian peasants would agree to the nationalisation of all the land (including the peasants' lands). To a certain extent, this view of Maslov's could be connected with his "original" theory (which merely parrots the bourgeois critics of Marx), namely, his repudiation of absolute rent and his recognition of the "law" (or "fact", as Maslov expressed it) "of diminishing returns".

In point of fact, however, already the 1905 Revolution revealed that the vast majority of the peasants in Russia, members of village communes as well as homestead peasants, were in favour of nationalisation of all the land. The 1917 Revolution confirmed this, and after the assumption of power by the proletariat this was done. The Bolsheviks remained loyal to Marxism and never

tried (in spite of Kautsky, who, without a scrap of evidence, accuses us of doing so) to "skip" the bourgeois-democratic revolution. The Bolsheviks, first of all, helped the most radical, most revolutionary of the bourgeois-democratic ideologists of the peasants, those who stood closest to the proletariat, namely, the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries, to carry out what was in effect nationalisation of the land. On October 26, 1917, i.e., on the very first day of the proletarian, socialist revolution, private ownership of land was abolished in Russia.

This laid the foundation, the most perfect from the point of view of the development of capitalism (Kautsky cannot deny this without breaking with Marx), and at the same time created an agrarian system which is the *most flexible* from the point of view of the transition to socialism. From the bourgeois-democratic point of view, the revolutionary peasants in Russia *could go no farther: there can be nothing* "more ideal" from this point of view, nothing "more radical" (from this same point of view) than nationalisation of the land and equal land tenure. It was the Bolsheviks, and only the Bolsheviks, who, thanks only to the victory of the *proletarian* revolution, helped the peasants to carry the bourgeois-democratic revolution really to its conclusion. And only in this way did they do the utmost to facilitate and accelerate the transition to the socialist revolution.

One can judge from this what an incredible muddle Kautsky offers to his readers when he accuses the Bolsheviks of failing to understand the bourgeois character of the revolution, and yet himself betrays such a departure from Marxism that he *says nothing* about nationalisation of the land and presents the least revolutionary (from the bourgeois point of view) liberal agrarian reform as "something socialistic"!

We have now come to the third question formulated above, namely, to what extent the proletarian dictatorship in Russia has taken into account the necessity of passing to farming in common. Here again, Kautsky commits something very much in the nature of a forgery: he quotes only the "theses" of one Bolshevik which speak of the task of passing to farming in common! After quoting one of these theses, our "theoretician" triumphantly exclaims:

"Unfortunately, a task is not accomplished by the fact that it is called a task. For the time being, collective farming in Russia is doomed to remain on paper only. Never yet have the small peasants anywhere adopted collective farming under the influence of theoretical convictions" (p. 50).

Never as yet and nowhere has a literary swindle been perpetrated equal to that to which Kautsky has stooped. He quotes "theses", but says nothing about the *law* of the Soviet government. He talks about "theoretical convictions", but says



nothing about the proletarian state power which holds in its hands the factories and goods! All that Kautsky the Marxist wrote in 1899 in his *Agrarian Question* about the means at the disposal of the proletarian state for bringing about the gradual transition of the small peasants to socialism has been forgotten by Kautsky the renegade in 1918.

Of course, a few hundred state-supported agricultural communes and state farms (i.e., large farms cultivated by associations of workers at the expense of the state) are very little, but can Kautsky's ignoring of this fact be called "criticism"?

The nationalisation of the land that has been effected in Russia by the proletarian dictatorship has best ensured the carrying of the bourgeois-democratic revolution to its conclusion—even in the event of a victory of the counter-revolution causing a reversion from land nationalisation to land division (I made a special examination of this possibility in my pamphlet on the agrarian programme of the Marxists in the 1905 Revolution\*). In addition, the nationalisation of the land has given the proletarian state the maximum opportunity of passing to socialism in agriculture.

To sum up, Kautsky has presented us, as far as theory is concerned, with an incredible hodge-podge which is a complete renunciation of Marxism, and, as far as practice is concerned, with a policy of servility to the bourgeoisie and their reformism. A fine criticism indeed!

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Kautsky begins his "economic analysis" of industry with the following magnificent argument:

Russia has a large-scale capitalist industry. Cannot a socialist system of production be built up on this foundation? "One might think so if socialism meant that the workers of the separate factories and mines made these their property" (literally appropriated these for themselves) "in order to carry on production separately at each factory" (p. 52). "This very day, August 5, as I am writing these lines," Kautsky adds, "a speech is reported from Moscow delivered by Lenin on August 2, in which he is stated to have declared: 'The workers are holding the factories firmly in their hands, and the peasants will not return the land to the landowners.'"<sup>\*\*</sup> Up till now, the slogan: the factories to the workers, and the land to the peasants, has been an anarcho-syndicalist slogan, not a Social-Democratic one" (pp. 52-53).

I have quoted this passage in full so that the Russian workers,

\* See *Collected Works*, Vol. 13, pp 217-431 —Ed.

\*\* Ibid., Vol. 28, p. 43.—Ed.

who formerly respected Kautsky, and quite rightly, might see for themselves the methods employed by this deserter to the bourgeois camp.

Just think: on August 5, when numerous decrees on the nationalisation of factories in Russia had been issued—and not a single factory had been “appropriated” by the workers, but had *all* been converted into the property of the Republic—on August 5, Kautsky, on the strength of an obviously crooked interpretation of one sentence in my speech, tries to make the German readers believe that in Russia the factories are being turned over to individual groups of workers! And after that Kautsky, at great length, chews the cud about it being wrong to turn over factories to individual groups of workers!

This is not criticism, it is the trick of a lackey of the bourgeoisie, whom the capitalists have hired to slander the workers' revolution.

The factories must be turned over to the state, or to the municipalities, or the consumers' co-operative societies, say: Kautsky over and over again, and finally adds:

“This is what they are now trying to do in Russia. . . .” Now! What does that mean? In August? Why, could not Kautsky have commissioned his friends Stein or Axelrod, or any of the other friends of the Russian bourgeoisie, to translate at least one of the decrees on the factories?

“How far they have gone in this direction, we cannot yet tell. At all events, this aspect of the activity of the Soviet Republic is of the greatest interest to us, but it still remains entirely shrouded in darkness. There is no lack of decrees. . . .” (That is why Kautsky ignores their *content*, or conceals it from his readers!) “But there is no reliable information as to the effect of these decrees. Socialist production is impossible without all-round, detailed, reliable and rapidly informative statistics. The Soviet Republic cannot possibly have created such statistics yet. What we learn about its economic activities is highly contradictory and can in no way be verified. This, too, is a result of the dictatorship and the suppression of democracy. There is no freedom of the press, or of speech” (p. 53).

This is how history is written! From a “free” press of the capitalists and Dutov men Kautsky would have received information about factories being taken over by the workers. . . . This “serious savant” who stands above classes is magnificent, indeed! About the countless facts which show that the factories are being turned over to the Republic *only*, that they are managed by an organ of Soviet power, the Supreme Economic Council, which is constituted mainly of workers elected by the trade unions, Kautsky refuses to say a single word. With the obstinacy of the “man in the muffler”, he stubbornly keeps repeating one thing: give me peaceful democracy, without civil war, without a dictatorship and with good statistics (the Soviet Republic has created a statistical

service in which the best statistical experts in Russia are employed, but, of course, ideal statistics cannot be obtained so quickly). In a word, what Kautsky demands is a revolution without revolution, without fierce struggle, without violence. It is equivalent to asking for strikes in which workers and employers do not get excited. Try to find the difference between this kind of "socialist" and common liberal bureaucrat!

So, relying upon such "factual material", i.e., deliberately and contemptuously ignoring the innumerable facts, Kautsky "concludes":

"It is doubtful whether the Russian proletariat has obtained more in the sense of real practical gains, and not of mere decrees, under the Soviet Republic than it would have obtained from a Constituent Assembly, in which, as in the Soviets, socialists, although of a different hue, predominated" (p. 58).

A gem, is it not? We would advise Kautsky's admirers to circulate this utterance as widely as possible among the Russian workers, for Kautsky could not have provided better material for gauging the depth of his political degradation. Comrade workers, Kerensky, too, was a "socialist", only of a "different hue"! Kautsky the historian is satisfied with the name, the title which the Right Socialist-Revolutionaries and the Mensheviks "appropriated" to themselves. Kautsky the historian refuses even to listen to the facts which show that under Kerensky the Mensheviks and the Right Socialist-Revolutionaries supported the imperialist policy and marauding practices of the bourgeoisie; he is discreetly silent about the fact that the majority in the Constituent Assembly consisted of these very champions of imperialist war and bourgeois dictatorship. And this is called "economic analysis"!

In conclusion let me quote another sample of this "economic analysis":

"... After nine months' existence, the Soviet Republic, instead of spreading general well-being, felt itself obliged to explain why there is general want" (p. 41).

We are accustomed to hear such arguments from the lips of the Cadets. All the flunkys of the bourgeoisie in Russia argue in this way: show us, after nine months, your general well-being—and this after four years of devastating war, with foreign capital giving all-round support to the sabotage and rebellions of the bourgeoisie in Russia. *Actually*, there has remained absolutely no difference whatever, not a shadow of difference, between Kautsky and a counter-revolutionary bourgeois. His honeyed talk, cloaked in the guise of "socialism", only repeats what the Kornilov men, the Dutov men and Krasnov men in Russia say bluntly, straightforwardly and without embellishment.

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The above lines were written on November 9, 1918. That same night news was received from Germany announcing the beginning of a victorious revolution, first in Kiel and other northern towns and ports, where power has passed into the hands of Councils of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies, then in Berlin, where, too, power has passed into the hands of a Council.

The conclusion which still remained to be written to my pamphlet on Kautsky and on the proletarian revolution is now superfluous.

November 10, 1918

*N. Lenin*

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## Appendix I

### THESES ON THE CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY\*

## Appendix II

### VANDERVELDE'S NEW BOOK ON THE STATE

It was only after I had read Kautsky's book that I had the opportunity to acquaint myself with Vandervelde's *Socialism versus the State* (Paris, 1918). A comparison of the two books involuntarily suggests itself. Kautsky is the ideological leader of the Second International (1889-1914), while Vandervelde, in his capacity of Chairman of the International Socialist Bureau, is its official representative. Both represent the complete bankruptcy of the Second International. and both with the dexterity of experienced journalists "skilfully" mask this bankruptcy and their own bankruptcy and desertion to the bourgeoisie with Marxist catchwords. One gives us a striking example of what is typical of German opportunism, ponderous, theorising and grossly falsifying Marxism by trimming it of all that is unacceptable to the bourgeoisie. The other is typical of the Latin—to a certain extent, one may say, of the West-European (that is, west of Germany)—variety of prevailing opportunism, which is more flexible, less ponderous, and which falsifies Marxism by the same fundamental method, but in a more subtle manner.

Both radically distort Marx's teaching on the state as well as his teaching on the dictatorship of the proletariat; Vandervelde deals more with the former subject, Kautsky with the latter. Both obscure the very close and inseparable connection that exists between the two subjects. Both are revolutionaries and Marxists in word, but renegades in practice, who strain every effort to *dissociate themselves* from revolution. Neither of them has anything that permeates the works of Marx and Engels, and that actually distinguishes socialism from a bourgeois caricature of it, namely, the elucidation of the tasks of revolution as *distinct* from the tasks of reform, the elucidation of revolutionary tactics as distinct from reformist tactics, the elucidation of the role of the proletariat in the *abolition* of the system, order or regime of wage-

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\* See present edition, Vol. 2, pp. 456-59.—*f.d.*

slavery as distinct from the role of the proletariat of the "Great" Powers which shares with the bourgeoisie a particle of the latter's imperialist superprofits and superbooty.

We shall quote a few of Vandervelde's most important arguments in support of this opinion.

Like Kautsky, Vandervelde quotes Marx and Engels with great zeal, and like Kautsky, he quotes from Marx and Engels anything you like *except* what is absolutely unacceptable to the bourgeoisie and what distinguishes a revolutionary from a reformist. He speaks volubly about the conquest of political power by the proletariat, since practice has already confined this within strictly parliamentary limits. But as regards the fact that after the experience of the Paris Commune, Marx and Engels found it necessary to supplement the partially obsolete *Communist Manifesto* with an elucidation of the truth that the working class cannot simply lay hold of the ready-made state machinery, but must *smash* it—not a single word has he to say about that! Vandervelde and Kautsky, as if by agreement, pass over in complete silence what is most essential in the *experience* of the proletarian revolution, precisely that which distinguishes proletarian revolution from bourgeois reforms.

Like Kautsky, Vandervelde talks about the dictatorship of the proletariat only to dissociate himself from it. Kautsky did it by gross falsifications. Vandervelde does it in a more subtle way. In the part of his book, Section 4, on the subject of the "conquest of political power by the proletariat", he devotes sub-section *b* to the question of the "collective dictatorship of the proletariat", "quotes" Marx and Engels (I repeat: omitting precisely what pertains to the main point, namely, the *smashing* of the old, bourgeois-democratic state machine), and concludes:

"... In socialist circles, the social revolution is commonly conceived in the following manner: a new Commune, this time victorious, and not in one place but in the main centres of the capitalist world.

"A hypothesis, but a hypothesis which has nothing improbable about it at a time when it is becoming evident that the post-war period will see in many countries unprecedented class antagonisms and social convulsions.

"But if the failure of the Paris Commune, not to speak of the difficulties of the Russian revolution, proves anything at all, it proves that it is impossible to put an end to the capitalist system until the proletariat has sufficiently prepared itself to make proper use of the power the force of circumstances may place into its hands" (p. 73).

And absolutely nothing more on the point at issue!

Here they are, the leaders and representatives of the Second International! In 1912 they signed the Basle Manifesto, which explicitly speaks of the connection between that very war which broke out in 1914 and a proletarian revolution, and actually holds it up as a *threat*. And when the war broke out and a revolutionary

situation arose, the Kautskys and Vanderveldes began to dissociate themselves from revolution. A revolution of the Paris Commune type is only a not improbable hypothesis! This is quite analogous to Kautsky's argument about the possible role of the Soviets in Europe.

But that is just the way every educated *liberal* argues; he will, no doubt, agree now that a new Commune is "not improbable", that the Soviets have a great role to play, etc. The proletarian revolutionary differs from the liberal precisely in that he, as a theoretician, analyses the new significance of the Commune and the Soviets *as a state*. Vandervelde, however, *passes over in silence* everything Marx and Engels said at such length on the subject when analysing the experience of the Paris Commune.

As a practical worker, as a politician, a Marxist should have made it clear that only traitors to socialism can now evade the task of elucidating the need for a proletarian revolution (of the Commune type, the Soviet type, or perhaps of some third type), of explaining the necessity of preparing for it, of conducting propaganda for revolution among the people, of refuting the petty-bourgeois prejudices against it, etc.

But neither Kautsky nor Vandervelde does anything of the sort, precisely because they themselves are traitors to socialism, who want to maintain their reputation as socialists and Marxists among the workers

Take the theoretical formulation of the question.

The state, even in a democratic republic, is nothing but a machine for the suppression of one class by another. Kautsky is familiar with this truth, admits it, agrees with it, but... he evades the fundamental question as to what particular class the proletariat must suppress when it establishes the proletarian state, for what reasons, and by what means.

Vandervelde is familiar with, admits, agrees with and quotes this fundamental proposition of Marxism (p. 72 of his book), but... he does not say a single word on the "unpleasant" (for the capitalist gentlemen) subject of the *suppression of the resistance of the exploiters!*

Both Vandervelde and Kautsky have completely evaded this "unpleasant" subject. Therein lies their apostasy.

Like Kautsky, Vandervelde is a past master in the art of substituting eclecticism for dialectics. On the one hand it cannot but be admitted, and on the other hand it must be confessed. On the one hand, the term state may mean "the nation as a whole" (see Littré's dictionary—a learned work, it cannot be denied—and Vandervelde, p. 87); on the other hand, the term state may mean the "government" (*ibid.*). Vandervelde quotes this learned platitude, with approval, *side by side* with quotations from Marx.

The Marxist meaning of the word "state" differs from the ordinary meaning, writes Vandervelde. Hence, "misunderstandings" may arise. "Marx and Engels regard the state not as the state in the broad sense, not as an organ of guidance, as the representative of the general interests of society (*intérêts généraux de la société*). It is the state as the power, the state as the organ of authority, the state as the instrument of the rule of one class over another" (pp. 75-76 of Vandervelde's book).

Marx and Engels speak about the abolition of the state only in its second meaning. . . . "Too absolute affirmations run the risk of being inexact. There are many transitional stages between the capitalist state, which is based on the exclusive rule of one class, and the proletarian state, the aim of which is to abolish all classes" (p. 156).

There you have an example of Vandervelde's "manner", which is only slightly different from that of Kautsky's, and, in essence, identical with it. Dialectics repudiate absolute truths and explain the successive changes of opposites and the significance of crises in history. The eclectic does not want propositions that are "too absolute", because he wants to push forward his philistine desire to substitute "*transitional stages*" for revolution.

The Kautskys and Vanderveldes say nothing about the fact that the transitional stage between the state as an organ of the rule of the capitalist class and the state as an organ of the rule of the proletariat is *revolution*, which means *overthrowing* the bourgeoisie and *breaking up*, smashing, *their* state machine.

The Kautskys and Vanderveldes obscure the fact that the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie must be replaced by the dictatorship of *one* class, the proletariat, and that the "transitional stages" of the *revolution* will be followed by the "transitional stages" of the gradual withering away of the proletarian state.

Therein lies their political apostasy.

Therein, theoretically, philosophically, lies their substitution of eclecticism and sophistry for dialectics. Dialectics are concrete and revolutionary and distinguish between the "transition" from the dictatorship of one class to the dictatorship of another and "transition" from the democratic proletarian state to the non-state ("the withering away of the state"). To please the bourgeoisie, the eclecticism and sophistry of the Kautskys and Vanderveldes blur all that is concrete and precise in the class struggle and advance instead the general concept "transition", under which they may hide (as *nine-tenths* of the official *Social-Democrats* of our time *do hide*) their renunciation of revolution!

As an eclectic and sophist, Vandervelde is more skilful and subtle than Kautsky; for the *phrase*, "transition from the state in the



narrow sense to the state in the broad sense", can serve as a means of evading all and sundry problems of revolution, all the difference between revolution and reform, and even the difference between the Marxist and the liberal. For what bourgeois with European education would think of denying, "in general", "transitional stages" in this "general" sense?

Vandervelde writes:

"I agree with Guesde that it is impossible to socialise the means of production and exchange without the following two conditions having been fulfilled:

"1. The transformation of the present state as the organ of the rule of one class over another into what Menger calls a people's labour state, by the conquest of political power by the proletariat.

"2. Separation of the state as an organ of authority from the state as an organ of guidance, or, to use Saint-Simon's expression, of the government of men from the administration of things" (p. 89).

Vandervelde puts this in italics, laying special emphasis on the importance of these propositions. But this is a sphere eclectic hodge-podge, a complete rupture with Marxism! The "people's labour state" is just a paraphrase of the old "free people's state", which the German Social-Democrats paraded in the seventies and which Engels branded as an absurdity.<sup>62</sup> The term "people's labour state" is a phrase worthy of petty-bourgeois democrats (like our Left Socialist-Revolutionaries), a phrase which substitutes *non-class* concepts for class concepts. Vandervelde places the conquest of state power by the *proletariat* (by one *class*) alongside of the "people's" state, and fails to see that the result is a hodge-podge. With Kautsky and his "pure democracy", the result is a similar hodge-podge, and a similar anti-revolutionary, philistine disregard of the tasks of the class revolution, of the class, proletarian, dictatorship, of the *class* (proletarian) state.

Further, the government of men will disappear and give way to the administration of things only when the state *in all forms* withers away. But talking about this relatively distant future, Vandervelde overlays, obscures the task of *tomorrow*, namely, the *overthrow* of the bourgeoisie.

This trick is also equivalent to subserviency to the liberal bourgeoisie. The liberal is willing to talk about what will happen when it is not necessary to govern men. Why not indulge in such innocuous dreams? But about the proletariat having to crush the bourgeoisie's resistance to their expropriation—not a word. The class interests of the bourgeoisie demand it.

*Socialism versus the State.* This is Vandervelde's bow to the proletariat. It is not difficult to make a bow; every "democratic" politician knows how to make a bow to his electors. And under cover of a "bow", an anti-revolutionary, anti-proletarian meaning is insinuated.

Vandervelde extensively paraphrases Ostrogorsky<sup>63</sup> to show what amount of deceit, violence, corruption, mendacity, hypocrisy and oppression of the poor is hidden beneath the civilised, polished and perfumed exterior of modern bourgeois democracy. But he draws no conclusion from this. He fails to notice that bourgeois democracy suppresses the working and exploited people and that *proletarian democracy* will have to *suppress the bourgeoisie*. Kautsky and Vandervelde are blind to this. The class interests of the bourgeoisie, in whose wake these petty-bourgeois traitors to Marxism are floundering, *demand* that this question be evaded, that it be hushed up, or that the necessity of such suppression be directly denied.

Petty-bourgeois eclecticism versus Marxism, sophistry versus dialectics, philistine reformism versus proletarian revolution—that should have been the title of Vandervelde's book.

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# **FIRST CONGRESS OF THE COMMUNIST INTERNATIONAL<sup>64</sup>**

**MARCH 2-6, 1919**

## **THESES AND REPORT ON BOURGEOIS DEMOCRACY AND THE DICTATORSHIP OF THE PROLETARIAT MARCH 4**

1. Faced with the growth of the revolutionary workers' movement in every country, the bourgeoisie and their agents in the workers' organisations are making desperate attempts to find ideological and political arguments in defence of the rule of the exploiters. Condemnation of dictatorship and defence of democracy are particularly prominent among these arguments. The falsity and hypocrisy of this argument, repeated in a thousand strains by the capitalist press and at the Berne<sup>65</sup> yellow International Conference in February 1919, are obvious to all who refuse to betray the fundamental principles of socialism.

2. Firstly, this argument employs the concepts of "democracy in general" and "dictatorship in general", without posing the question of the class concerned. This non-class or above-class presentation, which supposedly is popular, is an outright travesty of the basic tenet of socialism, namely, its theory of class struggle, which socialists who have sided with the bourgeoisie recognise in words but disregard in practice. For in no civilised capitalist country does "democracy in general" exist; all that exists is bourgeois democracy, and it is not a question of "dictatorship in general", but of the dictatorship of the oppressed class, i.e., the proletariat, over its oppressors and exploiters, i.e., the bourgeoisie, in order to overcome the resistance offered by the exploiters in their fight to maintain their domination.

3. History teaches us that no oppressed class ever did, or could, achieve power without going through a period of dictatorship, i.e., the conquest of political power and forcible suppression of the resistance always offered by the exploiters—a resistance that is most desperate, most furious, and that stops at nothing. The bourgeoisie, whose domination is now defended by the socialists who denounce "dictatorship in general" and extol "democracy in general", won power in the advanced countries through a series

of insurrections, civil wars, and the forcible suppression of kings, feudal lords, slaveowners and their attempts at restoration. In books, pamphlets, congress resolutions and propaganda speeches socialists everywhere have thousands and millions of times explained to the people the class nature of these bourgeois revolutions and this bourgeois dictatorship. That is why the present defence of bourgeois democracy under cover of talk about "democracy in general" and the present howls and shouts against proletarian dictatorship under cover of shouts about "dictatorship in general" are an outright betrayal of socialism. They are, in fact, desertion to the bourgeoisie, denial of the proletariat's right to its own, proletarian, revolution, and defence of bourgeois reformism at the very historical juncture when bourgeois reformism throughout the world has collapsed and the war has created a revolutionary situation.

4. In explaining the class nature of bourgeois civilisation, bourgeois democracy and the bourgeois parliamentary system, all socialists have expressed the idea formulated with the greatest scientific precision by Marx and Engels, namely, that the most democratic bourgeois republic is no more than a machine for the suppression of the working class by the bourgeoisie, for the suppression of the working people by a handful of capitalists.<sup>64</sup> There is not a single revolutionary, not a single Marxist among those now shouting against dictatorship and for democracy who has not sworn and vowed to the workers that he accepts this basic truth of socialism. But now, when the revolutionary proletariat is in a fighting mood and taking action to destroy this machine of oppression and to establish proletarian dictatorship, these traitors to socialism claim that the bourgeoisie have granted the working people "pure democracy", have abandoned resistance and are prepared to yield to the majority of the working people. They assert that in a democratic republic there is not, and never has been, any such thing as a state machine for the oppression of labour by capital.

5. The Paris Commune—to which all who parade as socialists pay lip service, for they know that the workers ardently and sincerely sympathise with the Commune—showed very clearly the historically conventional nature and limited value of the bourgeois parliamentary system and bourgeois democracy—institutions which, though highly progressive compared with medieval times, inevitably require a radical alteration in the era of proletarian revolution. It was Marx who best appraised the historical significance of the Commune. In his analysis, he revealed the exploiting nature of bourgeois democracy and the bourgeois parliamentary system under which the oppressed classes enjoy the right to decide once in several years which representative of

the propertied classes shall "represent and suppress" (*ver- und zertreten*) the people in parliament.<sup>67</sup> And it is now, when the Soviet movement is embracing the entire world and continuing the work of the Commune for all to see, that the traitors to socialism are forgetting the concrete experience and concrete lessons of the Paris Commune and repeating the old bourgeois rubbish about "democracy in general". The Commune was not a parliamentary institution.

6. The significance of the Commune, furthermore, lies in the fact that it endeavoured to crush, to smash to its very foundations, the bourgeois state apparatus, the bureaucratic, judicial, military and police machine, and to replace it by a self-governing, mass workers' organisation in which there was no division between legislative and executive power. All contemporary bourgeois democratic republics, including the German republic, which the traitors to socialism, in mockery of the truth, describe as a proletarian republic, retain this state apparatus. We therefore again get quite clear confirmation of the point that shouting in defence of "democracy in general" is actually defence of the bourgeoisie and their privileges as exploiters.

7. "Freedom of assembly" can be taken as a sample of the requisites of "pure democracy". Every class-conscious worker who has not broken with his class will readily appreciate the absurdity of promising freedom of assembly to the exploiters at a time and in a situation when the exploiters are resisting the overthrow of their rule and are fighting to retain their privileges. When the bourgeoisie were revolutionary, they did not, either in England in 1649 or in France in 1793, grant "freedom of assembly" to the monarchists and nobles, who summoned foreign troops and "assembled" to organise attempts at restoration. If the present-day bourgeoisie, who have long since become reactionary, demand from the proletariat advance guarantees of "freedom of assembly" for the exploiters, whatever the resistance offered by the capitalists to being expropriated, the workers will only laugh at their hypocrisy.

The workers know perfectly well, too, that even in the most democratic bourgeois republic "freedom of assembly" is a hollow phrase, for the rich have the best public and private buildings at their disposal, and enough leisure to assemble at meetings, which are protected by the bourgeois machine of power. The rural and urban workers and the small peasants—the overwhelming majority of the population—are denied all these things. As long as that state of affairs prevails, "equality", i.e., "pure democracy", is a fraud. The first thing to do to win genuine equality and enable the working people to enjoy democracy in practice is to deprive the exploiters of all the public and sumptuous private buildings, to give the working people leisure and to see to it that their free-

dom of assembly is protected by armed workers, not by scions of the nobility or capitalist officers in command of downtrodden soldiers.

Only when that change is effected can we speak of freedom of assembly and of equality without mocking at the workers, at working people in general, at the poor. And this change can be effected only by the vanguard of the working people, the proletariat, which overthrows the exploiters, the bourgeoisie.

8. "Freedom of the press" is another of the principal slogans of "pure democracy". And here, too, the workers know—and socialists everywhere have admitted it millions of times—that this freedom is a deception while the best printing-presses and the biggest stocks of paper are appropriated by the capitalists, and while capitalist rule over the press remains, a rule that is manifested throughout the world all the more strikingly, sharply and cynically the more democracy and the republican system are developed, as in America for example. The first thing to do to win real equality and genuine democracy for the working people, for the workers and peasants, is to deprive capital of the possibility of hiring writers, buying up publishing houses and bribing newspapers. And to do that the capitalists and exploiters have to be overthrown and their resistance suppressed. The capitalists have always used the term "freedom" to mean freedom for the rich to get richer and for the workers to starve to death. In capitalist usage, freedom of the press means freedom of the rich to bribe the press, freedom to use their wealth to shape and fabricate so-called public opinion. In this respect, too, the defenders of "pure democracy" prove to be defenders of an utterly foul and venal system that gives the rich control over the mass media. They prove to be deceivers of the people, who, with the aid of plausible, fine-sounding, but thoroughly false phrases, divert them from the concrete historical task of liberating the press from capitalist enslavement. Genuine freedom and equality will be embodied in the system which the Communists are building, and in which there will be no opportunity for amassing wealth at the expense of others, no objective opportunities for putting the press under the direct or indirect power of money, and no impediments in the way of any workingman (or groups of workingmen, in any numbers) for enjoying and practising equal rights in the use of public printing-presses and public stocks of paper.

9. The history of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries demonstrated, even before the war, what this celebrated "pure democracy" really is under capitalism. Marxists have always maintained that the more developed, the "purer" democracy is, the more naked, acute and merciless the class struggle becomes, and the "purer" the capitalist oppression and bourgeois dictatorship.

The Dreyfus case in republican France, the massacre of strikers by hired bands armed by the capitalists in the free and democratic American republic—these and thousands of similar facts illustrate the truth which the bourgeoisie are vainly seeking to conceal, namely, that actually terror and bourgeois dictatorship prevail in the most democratic of republics and are openly displayed every time the exploiters think the power of capital is being shaken.

10. The imperialist war of 1914-18 conclusively revealed even to backward workers the true nature of bourgeois democracy, even in the freest republics, as being a dictatorship of the bourgeoisie. Tens of millions were killed for the sake of enriching the German or the British group of millionaires and multimillionaires, and bourgeois military dictatorships were established in the freest republics. This military dictatorship continues to exist in the Allied countries even after Germany's defeat. It was mostly the war that opened the eyes of the working people, that stripped bourgeois democracy of its camouflage and showed the people the abyss of speculation and profiteering that existed during and because of the war. It was in the name of "freedom and equality" that the bourgeoisie waged the war, and in the name of "freedom and equality" that the munition manufacturers piled up fabulous fortunes. Nothing that the yellow Berne International does can conceal from the people the now thoroughly exposed exploiting character of bourgeois freedom, bourgeois equality and bourgeois democracy.

11. In Germany, the most developed capitalist country of continental Europe, the very first months of full republican freedom, established as a result of imperialist Germany's defeat, have shown the German workers and the whole world the true class substance of the bourgeois-democratic republic. The murder of Karl Liebknecht and Rosa Luxemburg is an event of epoch-making significance not only because of the tragic death of these finest people and leaders of the truly proletarian, Communist International, but also because the class nature of an advanced European state—it can be said without exaggeration, of an advanced state on a world-wide scale—has been conclusively exposed. If those arrested, i.e., those placed under state protection, could be assassinated by officers and capitalists with impunity, and this under a government headed by social-patriots, then the democratic republic where such a thing was possible is a bourgeois dictatorship. Those who voice their indignation at the murder of Karl Liebknecht and Rosa Luxemburg but fail to understand this fact are only demonstrating their stupidity, or hypocrisy. "Freedom" in the German republic, one of the freest and advanced republics of the world, is freedom to murder arrested leaders of the proletariat with impunity. Nor can it be otherwise as long as capital-

ism remains, for the development of democracy sharpens rather than dampens the class struggle which, by virtue of all the results and influences of the war and of its consequences, has been brought to boiling point.

Throughout the civilised world we see Bolsheviks being exiled, persecuted and thrown into prison. This is the case, for example, in Switzerland, one of the freest bourgeois republics, and in America, where there have been anti-Bolshevik pogroms, etc. From the standpoint of "democracy in general", or "pure democracy", it is really ridiculous that advanced, civilized, and democratic countries, which are armed to the teeth, should fear the presence of a few score men from backward, famine-stricken and ruined Russia, which the bourgeois papers, in tens of millions of copies, describe as savage, criminal, etc. Clearly, the social situation that could produce this crying contradiction is in fact a dictatorship of the bourgeoisie.

12. In these circumstances, proletarian dictatorship is not only an absolutely legitimate means of overthrowing the exploiters and suppressing their resistance, but also absolutely necessary to the entire mass of working people, being their only defence against the bourgeois dictatorship which led to the war and is preparing new wars.

The main thing that socialists fail to understand and that constitutes their short-sightedness in matters of theory, their subservience to bourgeois prejudices and their political betrayal of the proletariat is that in capitalist society, whenever there is any serious aggravation of the class struggle intrinsic to that society, there can be no alternative but the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie or the dictatorship of the proletariat. Dreams of some third way are reactionary, petty-bourgeois lamentations. That is borne out by more than a century of development of bourgeois democracy and the working-class movement in all the advanced countries, and notably by the experience of the past five years. This is also borne out by the whole science of political economy, by the entire content of Marxism, which reveals the economic inevitability, wherever commodity economy prevails, of the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie that can only be replaced by the class which the very growth of capitalism develops, multiplies, welds together and strengthens, that is, the proletarian class.

13. Another theoretical and political error of the socialists is their failure to understand that ever since the rudiments of democracy first appeared in antiquity, its forms inevitably changed over the centuries as one ruling class replaced another. Democracy assumed different forms and was applied in different degrees in the ancient republics of Greece, the medieval cities and the advanced capitalist countries. It would be sheer nonsense to think that



the most profound revolution in human history, the first case in the world of power being transferred from the exploiting minority to the exploited majority, could take place within the time-worn framework of the old, bourgeois, parliamentary democracy, without drastic changes, without the creation of new forms of democracy, new institutions that embody the new conditions for applying democracy, etc.

14. Proletarian dictatorship is similar to the dictatorship of other classes in that it arises out of the need, as every other dictatorship does, to forcibly suppress the resistance of the class that is losing its political sway. The fundamental distinction between the dictatorship of the proletariat and the dictatorship of other classes—landlord dictatorship in the Middle Ages and bourgeois dictatorship in all the civilised capitalist countries—consists in the fact that the dictatorship of the landowners and bourgeoisie was the forcible suppression of the resistance offered by the vast majority of the population, namely, the working people. In contrast, proletarian dictatorship is the forcible suppression of the resistance of the exploiters, i.e., an insignificant minority of the population, the landowners and capitalists.

It follows that proletarian dictatorship must inevitably entail not only a change in democratic forms and institutions, generally speaking, but precisely such a change as provides an unparalleled extension of the actual enjoyment of democracy by those oppressed by capitalism—the toiling classes.

And indeed, the form of proletarian dictatorship that has already taken shape, i.e., Soviet power in Russia, the Räte-System\* in Germany, the Shop Stewards Committees<sup>68</sup> in Britain and similar Soviet institutions in other countries, all this implies and presents to the toiling classes, i.e., the vast majority of the population, greater practical opportunities for enjoying democratic rights and liberties than ever existed before, even approximately, in the best and the most democratic bourgeois republics.

The substance of Soviet government is that the permanent and only foundation of state power, the entire machinery of state, is the mass-scale organisation of the classes oppressed by capitalism, i.e., the workers and the semi-proletarians (peasants who do not exploit the labour of others and regularly resort to the sale of at least a part of their own labour-power). It is the people, who even in the most democratic bourgeois republics, while possessing equal rights by law, have in fact been debarred by thousands of devices and subterfuges from participation in political life and enjoyment of democratic rights and liberties, that are

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\* System of councils.—*Ed.*

now drawn into constant and unflinching, moreover, decisive, participation in the democratic administration of the state.

15. The equality of citizens, irrespective of sex, religion, race, or nationality, which bourgeois democracy everywhere has always promised but never effected, and never could effect because of the domination of capital, is given immediate and full effect by the Soviet system, or dictatorship of the proletariat. The fact is that this can only be done by a government of the workers, who are not interested in the means of production being privately owned and in the fight for their division and redivision.

16. The old, i.e., bourgeois, democracy and the parliamentary system were so organised that it was the mass of working people who were kept farthest away from the machinery of government. Soviet power, i.e., the dictatorship of the proletariat, on the other hand, is so organised as to bring the working people close to the machinery of government. That, too, is the purpose of combining the legislative and executive authority under the Soviet organisation of the state and of replacing territorial constituencies by production units—the factory.

17. The army was a machine of oppression not only under the monarchy. It remains as such in all bourgeois republics, even the most democratic ones. Only the Soviets, the permanent organisations of government authority of the classes that were oppressed by capitalism, are in a position to destroy the army's subordination to bourgeois commanders and really merge the proletariat with the army; only the Soviets can effectively arm the proletariat and disarm the bourgeoisie. Unless this is done, the victory of socialism is impossible.

18. The Soviet organisation of the state is suited to the leading role of the proletariat as a class most concentrated and enlightened by capitalism. The experience of all revolutions and all movements of the oppressed classes, the experience of the world socialist movement teaches us that only the proletariat is in a position to unite and lead the scattered and backward sections of the working and exploited population.

19. Only the Soviet organisation of the state can really effect the immediate break-up and total destruction of the old, i.e., bourgeois, bureaucratic and judicial machinery, which has been, and has inevitably had to be, retained under capitalism even in the most democratic republics, and which is, in actual fact, the greatest obstacle to the practical implementation of democracy for the workers and working people generally. The Paris Commune took the first epoch-making step along this path. The Soviet system has taken the second.

20. Destruction of state power is the aim set by all socialists, including Marx above all. Genuine democracy, i.e., liberty and

equality, is unrealisable unless this aim is achieved. But its practical achievement is possible only through Soviet, or proletarian, democracy, for by enlisting the mass organisations of the working people in constant and unfailing participation in the administration of the state, it immediately begins to prepare the complete withering away of any state.

21. The complete bankruptcy of the socialists who assembled in Berne, their complete failure to understand the new, i.e., proletarian, democracy, is especially apparent from the following. On February 10, 1919, Branting delivered the concluding speech at the international Conference of the yellow International in Berne. In Berlin, on February 11, 1919, *Die Freiheit*,<sup>69</sup> the paper of the International's affiliates, published an appeal from the Party of "Independents"<sup>70</sup> to the proletariat. The appeal acknowledged the bourgeois character of the Scheidemann government, rebuked it for wanting to abolish the Soviets, which it described as *Träger und Schützer der Revolution*—vehicles and guardians of the revolution—and proposed that the Soviets be legalised, invested with government authority and given the right to suspend the operation of National Assembly decisions pending a popular referendum.

That proposal indicates the complete ideological bankruptcy of the theorists who defended democracy and failed to see its bourgeois character. This ludicrous attempt to combine the Soviet system, i.e., proletarian dictatorship, with the National Assembly, i.e., bourgeois dictatorship, utterly exposes the paucity of thought of the yellow socialists and Social-Democrats, their reactionary petty-bourgeois political outlook, and their cowardly concessions to the irresistibly growing strength of the new, proletarian democracy.

22. From the class standpoint, the Berne yellow International majority, which did not dare to adopt a formal resolution out of fear of the mass of workers, was right in condemning Bolshevism. This majority is in full agreement with the Russian Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries, and the Scheidemanns in Germany. In complaining of persecution by the Bolsheviks, the Russian Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries try to conceal the fact that they are persecuted for participating in the civil war on the side of the bourgeoisie against the proletariat. Similarly, the Scheidemanns and their party have already demonstrated in Germany that they, too, are participating in the civil war on the side of the bourgeoisie against the workers.

It is therefore quite natural that the Berne yellow International majority should be in favour of condemning the Bolsheviks. This was not an expression of the defence of "pure democracy", but of the self-defence of people who know and feel that in

the civil war they stand with the bourgeoisie against the proletariat.

That is why, from the class point of view, the decision of the yellow International majority must be considered correct. The proletariat must not fear the truth, it must face it squarely and draw all the necessary political conclusions.

Comrades, I would like to add a word or two to the last two points. I think that the comrades who are to report to us on the Berne Conference will deal with it in greater detail.

Not a word was said at the Berne Conference about the significance of Soviet power. We in Russia have been discussing this question for two years now. At our Party Conference in April 1917 we raised the following question, theoretically and politically: "What is Soviet power, what is its substance and what is its historical significance?" We have been discussing it for almost two years. And at our Party Congress we adopted a resolution on it.<sup>71</sup>

On February 11 Berlin *Die Freiheit* published an appeal to the German proletariat signed not only by the leaders of the Independent Social-Democratic Party of Germany, but also by all the members of the Independent Social-Democratic group in the Reichstag. In August 1918, Kautsky, one of the leading theorists of these Independents, wrote a pamphlet entitled *The Dictatorship of the Proletariat*, in which he declared that he was a supporter of democracy and of Soviet bodies, but that the Soviets must be bodies merely of an economic character and that they must not by any means be recognised as state organisations. Kautsky says the same thing in *Die Freiheit* of November 11 and January 12. On February 9 an article appeared by Rudolf Hilferding, who is also regarded as one of the leading and authoritative theorists of the Second International, in which he proposed that the Soviet system be united with the National Assembly juridically, by state legislation. That was on February 9. On February 11 this proposal was adopted by the whole of the Independent Party and published in the form of an appeal.

There is vacillation again, despite the fact that the National Assembly already exists, even after "pure democracy" has been embodied in reality, after the leading theorists of the Independent Social-Democratic Party have declared that the Soviet organisations must not be state organisations! This proves that these gentlemen really understand nothing about the new movement and about its conditions of struggle. But it goes to prove something else, namely, that there must be conditions, causes, for this vacillation! When, after all these events, after nearly two years of victorious revolution in Russia, we are offered resolutions like those adopted at the Berne Conference, which say nothing about

the Soviets and their significance, about which not a single delegate uttered a single word, we have a perfect right to say that all these gentlemen are dead to us as socialists and theorists.

However, comrades, from the practical side, from the political point of view, the fact that these Independents, who in theory and on principle have been opposed to these state organisations, suddenly make the stupid proposal to "peacefully" unite the National Assembly with the Soviet system, i.e., to unite the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie with the dictatorship of the proletariat, shows that a great change is taking place among the masses. We see that the Independents are all bankrupt in the socialist and theoretical sense and that an enormous change is taking place among the masses. The backward masses among the German workers are coming to us, have come to us! So, the significance of the Independent Social-Democratic Party of Germany, the best section of the Berne Conference, is nil from the theoretical and socialist standpoint. Still, it has some significance, which is that these waverers serve as an index to us of the mood of the backward sections of the proletariat. This, in my opinion, is the great historical significance of this Conference. We experienced something of the kind in our own revolution. Our Mensheviks traversed almost exactly the same path as that of the theorists of the Independents in Germany. At first, when they had a majority in the Soviets, they were in favour of the Soviets. All we heard then was: "Long live the Soviets!", "For the Soviets!", "The Soviets are revolutionary democracy!" When, however, we Bolsheviks secured a majority in the Soviets, they changed their tune; they said: the Soviets must not exist side by side with the Constituent Assembly. And various Menshevik theorists made practically the same proposals, like the one to unite the Soviet system with the Constituent Assembly and to incorporate the Soviets in the state structure. Once again it is here revealed that the general course of the proletarian revolution is the same throughout the world. First the spontaneous formation of Soviets, then their spread and development, and then the appearance of the practical problem: Soviets, or National Assembly, or Constituent Assembly, or the bourgeois parliamentary system; utter confusion among the leaders, and finally—the proletarian revolution. But I think we should not present the problem in this way after nearly two years of revolution; we should rather adopt concrete decisions because for us, and particularly for the majority of the West-European countries, spreading of the Soviet system is a most important task.

I would like to quote here just one Menshevik resolution. I asked Comrade Obolensky to translate it into German. He promised to do so but, unfortunately, he is not here. I shall try to render it from memory, as I have not the full text of it with me.

It is very difficult for a foreigner who has not heard anything about Bolshevism to arrive at an independent opinion about our controversial questions. Everything the Bolsheviks assert is challenged by the Mensheviks, and vice versa. Of course, it cannot be otherwise in the middle of a struggle, and that is why it is so important that the last Menshevik Party conference, held in December 1918, adopted the long and detailed resolution published in full in the Menshevik *Gazeta Pechatnikov*.<sup>72</sup> In this resolution the Mensheviks themselves briefly outline the history of the class struggle and of the Civil War. The resolution states that they condemn those groups in their party which are allied with the propertied classes in the Urals, in the South, in the Crimea and in Georgia—all these regions are enumerated. Those groups of the Menshevik Party which, in alliance with the propertied classes, fought against the Soviets are now condemned in the resolution; but the last point of the resolution also condemns those who joined the Communists. It follows that the Mensheviks were compelled to admit that there was no unity in their party, and that its members were either on the side of the bourgeoisie or on the side of the proletariat. The majority of the Mensheviks went over to the bourgeoisie and fought against us during the Civil War. We, of course, persecute Mensheviks, we even shoot them, when they wage war against us, fight against our Red Army and shoot our Red commanders. We responded to the bourgeois war with the proletarian war—there can be no other way. Therefore, from the political point of view, all this is sheer Menshevik hypocrisy. Historically, it is incomprehensible how people who have not been officially certified as mad could talk at the Berne Conference, on the instructions of the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries, about the Bolsheviks fighting the latter, yet keep silent about their own struggle in alliance with the bourgeoisie, against the proletariat.

All of them furiously attack us for persecuting them. This is true. But they do not say a word about the part they themselves have taken in the Civil War! I think that I shall have to provide the full text of the resolution to be recorded in the minutes, and I shall ask the foreign comrades to study it because it is a historical document in which the issue is raised correctly and which provides excellent material for appraising the controversy between the "socialist" trends in Russia. In between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie there is another class of people, who incline first this way and then the other. This has always been the case in all revolutions, and it is absolutely impossible in capitalist society, in which the proletariat and the bourgeoisie form two hostile camps, for intermediary sections not to exist between them. The existence of these waverers is historically inevitable, and, unfor-

tunately, these elements, who do not know themselves on whose side they will fight tomorrow, will exist for quite some time.

I want to make the practical proposal that a resolution be adopted in which three points shall be specifically mentioned.

*First:* One of the most important tasks confronting the West-European comrades is to explain to the people the meaning, importance and necessity of the Soviet system. There is a sort of misunderstanding on this question. Although Kautsky and Hilferding are bankrupt as theorists, their recent articles in *Die Freiheit* show that they correctly reflect the mood of the backward sections of the German proletariat. The same thing took place in our country: during the first eight months of the Russian revolution the question of the Soviet organisation was very much discussed, and the workers did not understand what the new system was and whether the Soviets could be transformed into a state machine. In our revolution we advanced along the path of practice, and not of theory. For example, formerly we did not raise the question of the Constituent Assembly from the theoretical side, and we did not say we did not recognise the Constituent Assembly. It was only later, when the Soviet organisations had spread throughout the country and had captured political power, that we decided to dissolve the Constituent Assembly. Now we see that in Hungary and Switzerland the question is much more acute.<sup>73</sup> On the one hand, this is very good: it gives us the firm conviction that in the West-European states the revolution is advancing more quickly and will yield great victories. On the other hand, a certain danger is concealed in it, namely, that the struggle will be so precipitous that the minds of the mass of workers will not keep pace with this development. Even now the significance of the Soviet system is not clear to a large mass of the politically educated German workers, because they have been trained in the spirit of the parliamentary system and amid bourgeois prejudices.

*Second:* About the spread of the Soviet system. When we hear how quickly the idea of Soviets is spreading in Germany, and even in Britain, it is very important evidence that the proletarian revolution will be victorious. Its progress can be only retarded for a short time. It is quite another thing, however, when Comrades Albert and Platten tell us that in the rural districts in their countries there are hardly any Soviets among the farm labourers and small peasants. In *Die Rote Fahne* I read an article opposing peasant Soviets, but quite properly supporting Soviets of farm labourers and of poor peasants.<sup>74</sup> The bourgeoisie and their lackeys, like Scheidemann and Co., have already issued the slogan of peasant Soviets. All we need, however, is Soviets of farm labourers and poor peasants. Unfortunately, from the reports of Comrades Albert, Platten and others, we see that, with the exception of

Hungary, very little is being done to spread the Soviet system in the countryside. In this, perhaps, lies the real and quite serious danger threatening the achievement of certain victory by the German proletariat. Victory can only be considered assured when not only the urban workers, but also the rural proletarians are organised, and organised not as before—in trade unions and co-operative societies—but in Soviets. Our victory was made easier by the fact that in October 1917 we marched with the peasants, with all the peasants. In that sense, our revolution at that time was a bourgeois revolution. The first step taken by our proletarian government was to embody in a law promulgated on October 26 (old style), 1917, on the next day after the revolution,<sup>75</sup> the old demands of all the peasants which peasant Soviets and village assemblies had put forward under Kerensky. That is where our strength lay; that is why we were able to win the overwhelming majority so easily. As far as the countryside was concerned, our revolution continued to be a bourgeois revolution, and only later, after a lapse of six months, were we compelled within the framework of the state organisation to start the class struggle in the countryside, to establish Committees of Poor Peasants, of semi-proletarians, in every village, and to carry on a methodical fight against the rural bourgeoisie. This was inevitable in Russia owing to the backwardness of the country. In Western Europe things will proceed differently, and that is why we must emphasise the absolute necessity of spreading the Soviet system also to the rural population in proper, perhaps new, forms.

*Third:* We must say that winning a Communist majority in the Soviets is the principal task in all countries in which Soviet government is not yet victorious. Our Resolutions' Commission discussed this question yesterday. Perhaps other comrades will express their opinion on it; but I would like to propose that these three points be adopted as a special resolution. Of course, we are not in a position to prescribe the path of development. It is quite likely that the revolution will come very soon in many West-European countries, but we, as the organised section of the working class, as a party, strive and must strive to gain a majority in the Soviets. Then our victory will be assured and no power on earth will be able to do anything against the communist revolution. If we do not, victory will not be secured so easily, and it will not be durable. And so, I would like to propose that these three points be adopted as a special resolution.



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## ***EIGHTH CONGRESS OF THE R.C.P.(B.)***

**MARCH 8-23, 1919**

### **1**

## **REPORT ON THE PARTY PROGRAMME MARCH 19**

(*Applause.*) Comrades, according to the division of subjects agreed on between Comrade Bukharin and myself, it is my task to explain the point of view of the commission on a number of concrete and most disputed points, or points which interest the Party most at the present time.

I shall begin by dealing briefly with the points which Comrade Bukharin touched on at the end of his report as points of dispute among us in the commission. The first relates to the structure of the preamble to the programme. In my opinion, Comrade Bukharin did not quite correctly explain here the reason the majority on the commission rejected all attempts to draw up the programme in such a way that everything relating to the old capitalism would be deleted. By the way Comrade Bukharin spoke he sometimes seemed to imply that the majority on the commission was apprehensive of what might be said about this, apprehensive that they would be accused of insufficient respect for the past. There can be no doubt that when the position of the majority is presented in this way it seems rather ridiculous. But this is very far from the truth. The majority rejected these attempts because they would be wrong. They would not correspond to the real state of affairs. Pure imperialism, without the fundamental basis of capitalism, has never existed, does not exist anywhere, and never will exist. This is an incorrect generalisation of everything that was said of the syndicates, cartels, trusts and finance capitalism, when finance capitalism was depicted as though it had none of the foundations of the old capitalism under it.

That is wrong. It would be particularly wrong for the era of the imperialist war and for the era following the imperialist war. Engels in his time, in one of his reflections on the future war, wrote that it would involve much more severe devastation than

that caused by the Thirty Years' War<sup>76</sup>; that in a large degree mankind would be reduced to savagery, that our artificial apparatus of trade and industry would collapse.<sup>77</sup> At the beginning of the war the traitor-socialists and opportunists boasted of the tenacity of capitalism and derided the "fanatics or semi-anarchists", as they called us. "Look," they said, "these predictions have not come true. Events have shown that they were true only of a very small number of countries and for a very short period of time!" And now, not only in Russia and not only in Germany, but even in the victor countries, a gigantic collapse of modern capitalism is beginning, a collapse so gigantic that it frequently removes this artificial apparatus and restores the old capitalism.

When Comrade Bukharin stated that an attempt might be made to present an integral picture of the collapse of capitalism and imperialism, we objected to it in the commission, and I must object to it here. Just try it, and you will see that you will not succeed. Comrade Bukharin made one such attempt in the commission, and himself gave it up. I am absolutely convinced that if anybody could do this, it is Comrade Bukharin, who has studied this question very extensively and thoroughly. I assert that such an attempt cannot be successful, because the task is a wrong one. We in Russia are now experiencing the consequences of the imperialist war and the beginning of the dictatorship of the proletariat. At the same time, in a number of the regions of Russia, cut off from each other more than formerly, we frequently see a regeneration of capitalism and the development of its early stage. That is something we cannot escape. If the programme were to be written in the way Comrade Bukharin wanted, it would be a wrong programme. At best, it would be a reproduction of all the best that has been said of finance capitalism and imperialism, but it would not reproduce reality, precisely because this reality is not integral. A programme made up of heterogeneous parts is inelegant (but that, of course, is not important), but any other programme would simply be incorrect. However unpleasant it may be, whatever it may lack in proportion, we shall be unable for a long time to escape this heterogeneity, this necessity of constructing from different materials. When we do escape it, we shall create another programme. But then we shall already be living in a socialist society. It would be ridiculous to pretend that things will be then what they are now.

We are living at a time when a number of the most elementary and fundamental manifestations of capitalism have been revived. Take, for instance, the collapse of transport, which we are experiencing so well, or rather so badly, in our own case. This same thing is taking place in other countries, too, even in the victor countries. And what does the collapse of transport mean

under the imperialist system? A return to the most primitive forms of commodity production. We know very well what our profiteers or bagmen are. This latter word, I think, has up to now been unknown to foreigners. And now? Speak to the comrades who have arrived for the Congress of the Third International. It turns out that similar words are beginning to appear in both Germany and Switzerland. And this is a category you cannot fit into any dictatorship of the proletariat; you have to return to the very dawn of capitalist society and commodity production.

To escape from this sad reality by creating a smooth and integral programme is to escape into something ethereal that is not of this world, to write a wrong programme. And it is by no means reverence for the past, as Comrade Bukharin politely hinted, which induced us here to insert passages from the old programme. What appeared to be implied was this: the programme was written in 1903 with the participation of Lenin; the programme is undoubtedly a bad one; but since old people love most of all to recall the past, in a new era a new programme has been drawn up which, out of reverence for the past, repeats the old programme. If it were so, such cranks ought to be laughed at. I assert that it is not so. The capitalism described in 1903 remains in existence in 1919 in the Soviet proletarian republic just because of the disintegration of imperialism, because of its collapse. Capitalism of this kind can be found, for instance, in Samara and in Vyatka gubernias, which are not very far from Moscow. In a period when civil war is rending the country, we shall not soon emerge from this situation, from this profiteering. That is why any other structure of the programme would be incorrect. We must state what actually exists; the programme must contain what is absolutely irrefutable, what has been established in fact. Only then will it be a Marxist programme.

Theoretically, Comrade Bukharin understands this perfectly and says that the programme must be concrete. But it is one thing to understand and another to act upon this understanding. Comrade Bukharin's concreteness is a bookish description of finance capitalism. In reality we have heterogeneous phenomena to deal with. In every agricultural gubernia there is free competition side by side with monopoly industry. Nowhere in the world has monopoly capitalism existed in a whole series of branches without free competition, nor will it exist. To write of such a system is to write of a system which is false and removed from reality. If Marx said of manufacture that it was a superstructure on mass small production,<sup>78</sup> imperialism and finance capitalism are a superstructure on the old capitalism. If its top is destroyed, the old capitalism is exposed. To maintain that there is such a thing

as integral imperialism without the old capitalism is merely making the wish father to the thought.

This is a natural mistake, one very easily committed. And if we had an integral imperialism before us, which had entirely altered capitalism, our task would be a hundred thousand times easier. It would have resulted in a system in which everything would be subordinated to finance capital alone. It would then only have remained to remove the top and to transfer what remained to the proletariat. That would have been extremely agreeable, but it is not so in reality. In reality the development is such that we have to act in an entirely different way. *Imperialism is a superstructure on capitalism.* When it collapses, we find ourselves dealing with the destruction of the top and the exposure of the foundation. That is why our programme, if it is to be a correct one, must state what actually exists. There is the old capitalism, which in a number of branches has grown to imperialism. Its tendencies are exclusively imperialist. Fundamental questions can be examined only from the point of view of imperialism. There is not a single major question of home or foreign policy which could be settled in any way except from the point of view of this tendency. This is not what the programme now speaks about. In reality, there exists a vast subsoil of the old capitalism. There is the superstructure of imperialism, which led to the war, and from this war followed the beginnings of the dictatorship of the proletariat. This is a phase you cannot escape. This fact is characteristic of the very rate of development of the proletarian revolution throughout the world, and will remain a fact for many years to come.

West-European revolutions will perhaps proceed more smoothly; nevertheless, very many years will be required for the reorganisation of the whole world, for the reorganisation of the majority of the countries. And this means that during the present transition period, we cannot escape this mosaic reality. We cannot cast aside this patchwork reality, however inelegant it may be; we cannot cast away one bit of it. If the programme were drawn up otherwise than it has been drawn up, it would be a wrong programme.

We say that we have arrived at the dictatorship. But we must know *how* we arrived at it. The past keeps fast hold of us, grasps us with a thousand tentacles, and does not allow us to take a single forward step, or compels us to take these steps badly in the way we are taking them. And we say that for the situation we are arriving at to be understood, it must be stated how we proceeded and what led us to the socialist revolution. We were led to it by imperialism, by capitalism in its early commodity production forms. All this must be understood, because it is

only by reckoning with reality that we can solve such problems as, let us say, our attitude towards the middle peasants. And how is it, indeed, that there is such a category as a middle peasant in the era of purely imperialist capitalism? It did not exist even in countries that were simply capitalist. If we are to solve the problem of our attitude towards this almost medieval phenomenon (the middle peasants) purely from the point of view of imperialism and the dictatorship of the proletariat, we shall be absolutely unable to make ends meet, and we shall land in many difficulties. But if we are to change our attitude towards the middle peasant—then also have the goodness to say in the theoretical part where he came from and what he is. He is a small commodity producer. And this is the ABC of capitalism, of which we must speak, because we have not yet grown out of it. To brush this aside and say, "Why should we study the ABC when we have studied finance capitalism?" would be highly frivolous.

I have to say the same thing about the *national question*. Here too the wish is father to the thought with Comrade Bukharin. He says that we must not recognise the right of nations to self-determination. A nation means the bourgeoisie together with the proletariat. And are we, the proletarians, to recognise the right to self-determination of the despised bourgeoisie? That is absolutely incompatible! Pardon me, it is compatible with what actually exists. If you eliminate this, the result will be sheer fantasy. You refer to the process of differentiation which is taking place within the nations, the process of separation of the proletariat from the bourgeoisie. But let us see how this differentiation will proceed

Take, for instance, Germany, the model of an advanced capitalist country whose organisation of capitalism, finance capitalism, was superior to that of America. She was inferior in many other respects, in technical development and production and in the political sphere, but in respect of the organisation of finance capitalism, in respect of the transformation of monopoly capitalism into state monopoly capitalism, Germany was superior to America. She is a model, it would seem. But what is taking place there? Has the German proletariat become differentiated from the bourgeoisie? No! It was reported that the majority of the workers are opposed to Scheidemann in only a few of the large towns. But how did this come about? It was owing to the alliance between the Spartacists and the thrice-accursed German Menshevik-Independents, who make a muddle of everything and want to wed the system of workers' councils to a Constituent Assembly! And this is what is taking place in that very Germany! And she, mark you, is an advanced country.

Comrade Bukharin says, "Why do we need the right of nations to self-determination?" I must repeat what I said opposing him in the summer of 1917, when he proposed to delete the minimum programme and to leave only the maximum programme. I then retorted. "Don't halloo until you're out of the wood." When we have conquered power, and even then only after waiting a while, we shall do this.\* We have conquered power, we have waited a while, and now I am willing to do it. We have gone directly into socialist construction, we have beaten off the first assault that threatened us—now it will be in place. The same applies to the right of nations to self-determination. "I want to recognise only the right of the working classes to self-determination," says Comrade Bukharin. That is to say, you want to recognise something that has not been achieved in a single country except Russia. That is ridiculous.

Look at Finland; she is a democratic country, more developed, more cultured than we are. In Finland a process of separation, of the differentiation of the proletariat is taking a specific course, far more painful than was the case with us. The Finns have experienced the dictatorship of Germany; they are now experiencing the dictatorship of the Allied powers. But thanks to the fact that we have recognised the right of nations to self-determination, the process of differentiation has been facilitated there. I very well recall the scene when, at Smolny,<sup>79</sup> I handed the act to Svinhufvud<sup>80</sup>—which in Russian means "pighead"—the representative of the Finnish bourgeoisie, who played the part of a hangman. He amiably shook my hand, we exchanged compliments. How unpleasant that was! But it had to be done, because at that time the bourgeoisie were deceiving the people, were deceiving the working people by alleging that the Muscovites, the chauvinists, the Great Russians, wanted to crush the Finns. It had to be done.

Yesterday, was it not necessary to do the same thing in relation to the Bashkirian Republic?<sup>81</sup> When Comrade Bukharin said, "We can recognise this right in some cases", I even wrote down that he had included in the list the Hottentots, the Bushmen and the Indians. Hearing this enumeration, I thought, how is it that Comrade Bukharin has forgotten a small trifle, the Bashkirs? There are no Bushmen in Russia, nor have I heard that the Hottentots have laid claim to an autonomous republic, but we have Bashkirs, Kirghiz and a number of other peoples, and to these we cannot deny recognition. We cannot deny it to a single one of the peoples living within the boundaries of the former Russian Empire. Let us even assume that the Bashkirs have overthrown the

exploiters and we have helped them to do so. This is possible only when a revolution has fully matured, and it must be done cautiously, so as not to retard by one's interference that very process of the differentiation of the proletariat which we ought to expedite. What, then, can we do in relation to such peoples as the Kirghiz, the Uzbeks, the Tajiks, the Turkmen, who to this day are under the influence of their mullahs? Here, in Russia, the population, having had a long experience of the priests, helped us to overthrow them. But you know how badly the decree on civil marriage is still being put into effect. Can we approach these peoples and tell them that we shall overthrow their exploiters? We cannot do this, because they are entirely subordinated to their mullahs. In such cases we have to wait until the given nation develops, until the differentiation of the proletariat from the bourgeois elements, which is inevitable, has taken place.

Comrade Bukharin does not want to wait. He is possessed by impatience: "Why should we? When we have ourselves overthrown the bourgeoisie, proclaimed Soviet power and the dictatorship of the proletariat, why should we act thus?" This has the effect of a rousing appeal, it contains an indication of our path, but if we were to proclaim only this in our programme, it would not be a programme, but a proclamation. We may proclaim Soviet power, and the dictatorship of the proletariat, and express the contempt for the bourgeoisie they deserve a thousand times over, but in the programme we must write just what actually exists with the greatest precision. And then our programme will be incontrovertible.

We hold a strictly class standpoint. What we are writing in the programme is recognition of what has actually taken place since the time we wrote of the self-determination of nations in general. At that time there were still no proletarian republics. It was when they appeared, and only as they appeared, that we were able to write what is written here: "A federation of states organised after the *Soviet type*." The Soviet type is not yet Soviets as they exist in Russia, but the Soviet type is becoming international. And this is all we can say. To go farther, one step farther, one hair's breadth farther, would be wrong, and therefore unsuitable for a programme.

We say that account must be taken of the stage reached by the given nation on its way from medievalism to bourgeois democracy, and from bourgeois democracy to proletarian democracy. That is absolutely correct. All nations have the right to self-determination—there is no need to speak specially of the Hottentots and the Bushmen. The vast majority, most likely nine-tenths of the population of the earth, perhaps 95 per cent, come under this description, since all countries are on the way

from medievalism to bourgeois democracy or from bourgeois democracy to proletarian democracy. This is an absolutely inevitable course. More cannot be said, because it would be wrong, because it would not be what actually exists. To reject the self-determination of nations and insert the self-determination of the working people would be absolutely wrong, because this manner of settling the question does not reckon with the difficulties, with the zigzag course taken by differentiation within nations. In Germany it is not proceeding in the same way as in our country—in certain respects more rapidly, and in other respects in a slower and more sanguinary way. Not a single party in our country accepted so monstrous an idea as a combination of workers' councils and a Constituent Assembly. And yet we have to live side by side with these nations. Now Scheidemann's party is already saying that we want to conquer Germany. That is of course ridiculous, nonsensical. But the bourgeoisie have their own interests and their own press, which is shouting this to the whole world in hundreds of millions of copies; Wilson, too, is supporting this in his own interests. The Bolsheviks, they declare, have a large army, and they want, by means of conquest, to implant their Bolshevism in Germany. The best people in Germany—the Spartacists—told us that the German workers are being incited against the Communists; look, they are told, how bad things are with the Bolsheviks! And we cannot say that things with us are very good. And so our enemies in Germany influence the people with the argument that the proletarian revolution in Germany would result in the same disorders as in Russia. Our disorders are a protracted illness. We are contending with desperate difficulties in creating the proletarian dictatorship in our country. As long as the bourgeoisie, or the petty bourgeoisie, or even part of the German workers, are under the influence of this bugbear—"the Bolsheviks want to establish their system by force"—so long will the formula "the self-determination of the working people" not help matters. We must arrange things so that the German traitor-socialists will not be able to say that the Bolsheviks are trying to impose their universal system, which, as it were, can be brought into Berlin on Red Army bayonets. And this is what may happen if the principle of the self-determination of nations is denied.

Our programme must not speak of the self-determination of the working people, because that would be wrong. It must speak of what actually exists. Since nations are at different stages on the road from medievalism to bourgeois democracy and from bourgeois democracy to proletarian democracy, this thesis of our programme is absolutely correct. With us there have been very many zigzags on this road. Every nation must obtain the right to



self-determination, and that will make the self-determination of the working people easier. In Finland the process of separation of the proletariat from the bourgeoisie is remarkably clear, forceful and deep. At any rate, things will not proceed there as they do in our country. If we were to declare that we do not recognise any Finnish nation, but only the working people, that would be sheer nonsense. We cannot refuse to recognise what actually exists; it will itself compel us to recognise it. The demarcation between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie is proceeding in different countries in their own specific ways. Here we must act with utmost caution. We must be particularly cautious with regard to the various nations, for there is nothing worse than lack of confidence on the part of a nation. Self-determination of the proletariat is proceeding among the Poles. Here are the latest figures on the composition of the Warsaw Soviet of Workers' Deputies. Polish traitor-socialists—333, Communists—297. This shows that, according to our revolutionary calendar, October in that country is not very far off. It is somewhere about August or September 1917. But, firstly, no decree has yet been issued stating that all countries must live according to the Bolshevik revolutionary calendar; and even if it were issued, it would not be observed. And, secondly, the situation at present is such that the majority of the Polish workers, who are more advanced than ours and more cultured, share the standpoint of social-defencism, social-patriotism. We must wait. We cannot speak here of the self-determination of the working people. We must carry on propaganda in behalf of this differentiation. This is what we are doing, but there is not the slightest shadow of doubt that we must recognise the self-determination of the Polish nation now. That is clear. The Polish proletarian movement is taking the same course as ours, towards the dictatorship of the proletariat, but not in the same way as in Russia. And there the workers are being intimidated by statements to the effect that the Muscovites, the Great Russians, who have always oppressed the Poles, want to carry their Great-Russian chauvinism into Poland in the guise of communism. Communism cannot be imposed by force. When I said to one of the best comrades among the Polish Communists, "You will do it in a different way", he replied, "No, we shall do the same thing, but better than you." To such an argument I had absolutely no objections. They must be given the opportunity of fulfilling a modest wish—to create a better Soviet power than ours. We cannot help reckoning with the fact that things there are proceeding in rather a peculiar way, and we cannot say: "Down with the right of nations to self-determination! We grant the right of self-determination only to the working people." This self-determination proceeds in a very complex and difficult

way. It exists nowhere but in Russia, and, while foreseeing every stage of development in other countries, we must decree nothing from Moscow. That is why this proposal is unacceptable in principle.

I now pass to the other points which I am to deal with in accordance with the plan we have drawn up. I have given the first place to the question of *small proprietors and middle peasants*. In this respect, Clause 47 states:

"With regard to the middle peasants, the policy of the Russian Communist Party is to draw them into the work of socialist construction gradually and systematically. The Party sets itself the task of separating them from the kulaks, of winning them to the side of the working class by carefully attending to their needs, by combating their backwardness with ideological weapons and under no circumstances with measures of suppression, and by striving in all cases where their vital interests are concerned to come to practical agreements with them, making concessions to them in determining the methods of carrying out socialist reforms."

It seems to me that here we are formulating what the founders of socialism have frequently said regarding the middle peasants. The only defect of this clause is that it is not sufficiently concrete. We could hardly give more in a programme. But it is not only questions of programme we must discuss at the Congress, and we must give profound, thrice-profound consideration to the question of the middle peasants. We have information to the effect that in the revolts which have occurred in some places, a *general plan* is clearly discernible, and that this plan is obviously connected with the military plan of the whiteguards, who have decided on a general offensive in March and on the organisation of a number of revolts. In the presidium of the Congress there is a draft of an appeal in the name of the Congress, which will be reported to you. These revolts show as clear as can be that the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries and a part of the Mensheviks—in Bryansk it was the Mensheviks who worked to provoke the revolt—are acting as actual agents of the whiteguards. A general offensive of the whiteguards, revolts in the villages, the interruption of railway traffic—perhaps it will be possible to overthrow the Bolsheviks in this way? Here the role of the middle peasants stands out especially clearly, forcibly and insistently. At the Congress we must not only lay particular stress on our accommodating attitude towards the middle peasants, but also think over a number of measures, as concrete as possible, which will directly give at least something to the middle peasants. These measures are absolutely essential for self-preservation and for the struggle against all our enemies; they know that the middle peasant vacillates between us and them and they are endeavouring to win him away from us. Our position is now such that we possess vast reserves. We know that both the Polish and the Hungarian revo-

lutions are growing, and very rapidly. These revolutions will furnish us with proletarian reserves, will ease our situation and will to a very large extent reinforce our proletarian base, which is weak. This may happen in the next few months, but we do not know just when. You know that an acute moment has now come and therefore the question of the middle peasants now assumes tremendous practical importance.

Further, I should like to dwell on the question of *co-operation*—that is Clause 48 of our programme. To a certain extent this clause has become obsolete. When we were drafting it in the commission, co-operatives existed in our country, but there were no consumers' communes; a few days later, however, the decree on the merging of all forms of co-operatives into a single consumers' commune was issued. I do not know whether this decree has been published and whether the majority of those here present are acquainted with it. If not, it will be published tomorrow or the day after<sup>82</sup>. In this respect, this clause is already out of date, but it nevertheless appears to me that it is necessary, for we all know very well that it is a pretty long way from decrees to fulfilment. We have been toiling and moiling over the co-operatives since April 1918, and although we have achieved considerable success, it is not yet a decisive success. We have at times succeeded in organising the population in the co-operatives to such an extent that in many of the uyezds 98 per cent of the rural population are already so organised. But these co-operatives, which existed in capitalist society, are saturated with the spirit of bourgeois society, and are headed by Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries, by bourgeois experts. We have not yet been able to establish our authority over them, and here our task remains unaccomplished. Our decree is a step forward in that it creates consumers' communes; it orders that all forms of co-operation all over Russia shall be merged. But this decree, too, even if we carry it into effect entirely, leaves the autonomous sections of workers' co-operatives within the future consumers' communes, because representatives of the workers' co-operatives who have a practical knowledge of the matter told us, and proved it, that the workers' co-operatives, as a more highly developed organisation, should be preserved, since their operations are essential. There were quite a few differences and disputes within our Party over the question of co-operation; there was friction between the Bolsheviks in the co-operatives and the Bolsheviks in the Soviets. In principle, it seems to me that the question should undoubtedly be settled in the sense that this apparatus, the only one for which capitalism paved the way among the people, the only one operating among a rural population still at the level of primitive capitalism, must be preserved at all costs; it must be developed and must not, under any

circumstances, be discarded. The task here is a difficult one because in the majority of cases the leaders of the co-operatives are bourgeois specialists, very frequently real whiteguards. Hence the hatred for them, a legitimate hatred, hence the fight against them. But it must, of course, be conducted skilfully: *we must put a stop to the counter-revolutionary attempts of the co-operators, but this must not be a struggle against the apparatus of the co-operatives.* While getting rid of the counter-revolutionary leaders, we must establish our authority over the apparatus itself. Here our aim is exactly the same as it is in the case of the bourgeois experts, which is another question I should like to refer to.

The question of the *bourgeois experts* is provoking quite a lot of friction and divergences of opinion. When I recently had occasion to speak to the Petrograd Soviet, among the written questions submitted to me there were several devoted to the question of rates of pay. I was asked whether it is permissible in a socialist republic to pay as much as 3,000 rubles. We have, in fact, included this question in the programme, because dissatisfaction on these grounds has gone rather far. The question of the bourgeois experts has arisen in the army, in industry, in the co-operatives, everywhere. It is a very important question of the period of transition from capitalism to communism. We shall be able to build up communism only when, with the means provided by bourgeois science and technology, we make it more accessible to the people. There is no other way of building a communist society. But in order to build it in this way, we must take the apparatus from the bourgeoisie, we must enlist all these experts in the work. We have intentionally explained this question in detail in the programme in order to have it settled radically. We are perfectly aware of the effect of Russia's cultural underdevelopment, of what it is doing to Soviet power—which in principle has provided an immensely higher proletarian democracy, which has created a model of such democracy for the whole world—how this lack of culture is reducing the significance of Soviet power and reviving bureaucracy. The Soviet apparatus is accessible to all the working people in word, but actually it is far from being accessible to all of them, as we all know. And not because the laws prevent it from being so, as was the case under the bourgeoisie; on the contrary, our laws assist in this respect. But in this matter laws alone are not enough. A vast amount of educational, organisational and cultural work is required; this cannot be done rapidly by legislation but demands a vast amount of work over a long period. This question of the bourgeois experts must be settled quite definitely at this Congress. The settlement of the question will enable the comrades, who are undoubtedly following this Congress attentively, to lean on its authority and to realise what difficulties we are up against. It will

help those comrades who come up against this question at every step to take part at least in propaganda work.

The comrades here in Moscow who are representing the Spartacists at the Congress told us that in western Germany, where industry is most developed, and where the influence of the Spartacists among the workers is greatest, engineers and managers in very many of the large enterprises would come to the Spartacists, although the Spartacists have not yet been victorious there, and say, "We shall go with you." That was not the case in our country. Evidently, there the higher cultural level of the workers, the greater proletarianisation of the engineering personnel, and perhaps a number of other causes of which we do not know, have created relations which differ somewhat from ours.

At any rate, here we have one of the chief obstacles to further progress. We must immediately, without waiting for the support of other countries, immediately, at this very moment develop our productive forces. We cannot do this without the bourgeois experts. That must be said once and for all. Of course, the majority of these experts have a thoroughly bourgeois outlook. They must be placed in an environment of comradely collaboration, of worker commissars and of communist nuclei; they must be so placed that they cannot break out: but they must be given the opportunity of working in better conditions than they did under capitalism, since this group of people, which has been trained by the bourgeoisie, will not work otherwise. To compel a whole section of the population to work under coercion is impossible—that we know very well from experience. We can compel them not to take an active part in counter-revolution, we can intimidate them so as to make them dread to respond to the appeals of the whiteguards. In this respect the Bolsheviks act energetically. This can be done, and this we are doing adequately. This we have all learned to do. But it is impossible in this way to compel a whole section to work. These people are accustomed to do cultural work, they advanced it within the framework of the bourgeois system, that is, they enriched the bourgeoisie with tremendous material acquisitions, but gave them to the proletariat in infinitesimal doses—nevertheless they did advance culture, that was their job. As they see the working class promoting organised and advanced sections, which not only value culture but also help to convey it to the people, they are changing their attitude towards us. When a doctor sees that the proletariat is arousing the working people to independent activity in fighting epidemics, his attitude towards us completely changes. We have a large section of such bourgeois doctors, engineers, agronomists and co-operators, and when they see in practice that the proletariat is enlisting more and more people to this cause, they will be conquered *morally*,

and not merely be cut off from the bourgeoisie politically. Our task will then become easier. They will then of themselves be drawn into our apparatus and become part of it. To achieve this, sacrifices are necessary. To pay even two thousand million for this is a trifle. To fear this sacrifice would be childish, for it would mean that we do not comprehend the tasks before us.

The chaos in our transport, the chaos in industry and agriculture are undermining the very life of the Soviet Republic. Here we must resort to the most energetic measures, straining every nerve of the country to the utmost. We must not practise a policy of petty pinpricks with regard to the experts. These experts are not the servitors of the exploiters, they are active cultural workers, who in bourgeois society served the bourgeoisie, and of whom all socialists all over the world said that in a proletarian society they would serve *us*. In this transition period we must accord them the best possible conditions of life. That will be the best policy. That will be the most economical management. Otherwise, while saving a few hundred millions, we may lose so much that no sum will be sufficient to restore what we have lost.

When we discussed the question of rates of pay with the Commissar for Labour, Schmidt, he mentioned facts like these. He said that in the matter of equalising wages we have done more than any bourgeois state has done anywhere, or can do in scores of years. Take the pre-war rates of pay: a manual labourer used to get one ruble a day, twenty-five rubles a month, while an expert got five hundred rubles a month, not counting those who were paid hundreds of thousands of rubles. The expert used to receive twenty times more than the worker. Our present rates of pay vary from six hundred rubles to three thousand rubles—only five times more. We have done a great deal towards equalising the rates. Of course, we are now overpaying experts, but to pay them a little more for giving us their knowledge is not only worth while, but necessary and theoretically indispensable. In my opinion, this question is dealt with in sufficient detail in the programme. It must be particularly stressed. Not only must it be settled here in principle, but we must see to it that every delegate to the Congress, on returning to his locality, should, in his report to his organisation and in all his activities, secure its execution.

We have already succeeded in bringing about a thorough change of attitude among the vacillating intellectuals. Yesterday we were talking about legalising the petty-bourgeois parties, but today we are arresting the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries; by this switching back and forth we are applying a very definite system. A consistent and very firm line runs through these changes of policy, namely, *to cut off counter-revolution and to utilise the cultural apparatus of the bourgeoisie*. The Mensheviks are the

worst enemies of socialism, because they clothe themselves in a proletarian disguise; but the Mensheviks are a non-proletarian group. In this group there is only an insignificant proletarian upper layer, while the group itself consists of petty intellectuals. This group is coming over to our side. We shall take it over wholly, as a group. Every time they come to us, we say, "Welcome!" With every one of these vacillations, part of them come over to us. This was the case with the Mensheviks and the *Novaya Zhizn* people<sup>83</sup> and with the Socialist-Revolutionaries; this will be the case with all these vacillators, who will long continue to get in our way, whine and desert one camp for the other—you cannot do anything with them. But through all these vacillations we shall be enlisting groups of cultured intellectuals into the ranks of Soviet workers, and we shall cut off those elements that continue to support the whiteguards.

The next question which, according to the division of subjects, falls to my share is the *question of bureaucracy and of enlisting the broad mass of the people in Soviet work*. We have been hearing complaints about bureaucracy for a long time; the complaints are undoubtedly well founded. We have done what no other state in the world has done in the fight against bureaucracy. The apparatus which was a thoroughly bureaucratic and bourgeois apparatus of oppression, and which remains such even in the freest of bourgeois republics, we have destroyed to its very foundations. Take, for example, the courts. Here, it is true, the task was easier; we did not have to create a new apparatus, because anybody can act as a judge basing himself on the revolutionary sense of justice of the working classes. We have still by no means completed the work in this field but in a number of respects we have made the courts what they should be. We have created bodies on which not only men, but also women, the most backward and conservative section of the population, can be made to serve without exception.

The employees in the other spheres of government are more hardened bureaucrats. The task here is more difficult. We cannot live without this apparatus; every branch of government creates a demand for such an apparatus. Here we are suffering from the fact that Russia was not sufficiently developed as a capitalist country. Germany, apparently, will suffer less from this, because her bureaucratic apparatus passed through an extensive school, which sucks people dry but compels them to work and not just wear out armchairs, as happens in our offices. We dispersed these old bureaucrats, shuffled them and then began to place them in new posts. The tsarist bureaucrats began to join the Soviet institutions and practise their bureaucratic methods, they began to assume the colouring of Communists and, to succeed better in their

careers, to procure membership cards of the Russian Communist Party. And so, they have been thrown out of the door but they creep back in through the window. What makes itself felt here most is the lack of cultured forces. These bureaucrats may be dismissed, but they cannot be re-educated all at once. Here we are confronted chiefly with organisational, cultural and educational problems.

We can fight bureaucracy to the bitter end, to a complete victory, only when the whole population participates in the work of government. In the bourgeois republics not only is this impossible, *but the law itself prevents it*. The best of the bourgeois republics, no matter how democratic they may be, have thousands of legal hindrances which prevent the working people from participating in the work of government. What we have done, was to remove these hindrances, but so far we have not reached the stage at which the working people could participate in government. Apart from the law, there is still the level of culture, which you cannot subject to any law. The result of this low cultural level is that the Soviets, which by virtue of their programme are organs of government *by the working people*, are in fact organs of government *for the working people* by the advanced section of the proletariat, but not by the working people as a whole.

Here we are confronted by a problem which cannot be solved except by prolonged education. At present this task is an inordinately difficult one for us, because, as I have had frequent occasion to say, the section of workers who are governing is inordinately, incredibly *small*. We must secure help. According to all indications, such a reserve is growing up within the country. There cannot be the slightest doubt of the existence of a tremendous thirst for knowledge and of tremendous progress in education—mostly attained outside the schools—of tremendous progress in educating the working people. This progress cannot be confined within any school framework, but it is tremendous. All indications go to show that we shall obtain a vast reserve in the near future, which will replace the representatives of the small section of proletarians who have overstrained themselves in the work. But, in any case, our present situation in this respect is extremely difficult. Bureaucracy has been defeated. The exploiters have been eliminated. But the cultural level has not been raised, and therefore the bureaucrats are occupying their old positions. They can be forced to retreat only if the proletariat and the peasants are organised far more extensively than has been the case up to now, and only if real measures are taken to enlist the workers in government. You are all aware of such measures in the case of every People's Commissariat, and I shall not dwell on them.



The last point I have to deal with is the question of *the leading role of the proletariat and disfranchisement*. Our Constitution recognises the precedence of the proletariat in respect of the peasants and disfranchises the exploiters. It was this that the pure democrats of Western Europe attacked most. We answered, and are answering, that they have forgotten the most fundamental propositions of Marxism, they have forgotten that with them it is a case of bourgeois democracy, whereas we have passed to *proletarian* democracy. There is not a single country in the world which has done even one-tenth of what the Soviet Republic has done in the past few months for the workers and the poor peasants in enlisting them in the work of administering the state. That is an absolute truth. Nobody will deny that in the matter of true, not paper, democracy, in the matter of enlisting the workers and peasants, we have done more than has been done or could be done by the best of the democratic republics in hundreds of years. It was this that determined the significance of the Soviets, it was owing to this that the Soviets have become a slogan for the proletariat of all countries.

But this in no way saves us from stumbling over the inadequate culture of the people. We do not at all regard the question of disfranchising the bourgeoisie from an absolute point of view, because it is theoretically quite conceivable that the dictatorship of the proletariat may suppress the bourgeoisie at every step without disfranchising them. This is theoretically quite conceivable. Nor do we propose our Constitution as a model for other countries. All we say is that whoever conceives the transition to socialism without the suppression of the bourgeoisie is not a socialist. But while it is essential to suppress the bourgeoisie as a class, it is not essential to deprive them of suffrage and of equality. We do not want freedom for the bourgeoisie, we do not recognise equality of exploiters and exploited, but this question is so handled in the programme that the Constitution does not prescribe such measures as the inequality of workers and peasants. They were embodied in the Constitution *after* they were already in actual practice. It was not even the Bolsheviks who drew up the Constitution of the Soviets; it was drawn up to their own detriment by the Mensheviks and the Socialist-Revolutionaries before the Bolshevik revolution. They drew it up in accordance with the conditions actually obtaining. The organisation of the proletariat proceeded much more rapidly than the organisation of the peasants, which fact made the workers the bulwark of the revolution and gave them a virtual advantage. The next task is gradually to pass from these advantages to their equalisation. Nobody drove the bourgeoisie out of the Soviets either before or after the October Revolution. *The bourgeoisie themselves left the Soviets.*

That is how the matter stands with the question of suffrage for the bourgeoisie. It is our task to put the question with absolute clarity. We do not in the least apologise for our behaviour, but give an absolutely precise enumeration of the facts as they are. As we point out, our Constitution was obliged to introduce this inequality because the cultural level is low and because with us organisation is weak. But we do not make this an ideal; on the contrary, in its programme the Party undertakes to work systematically to abolish this inequality between the better organised proletariat and the peasants. We shall abolish this inequality as soon as we succeed in raising the cultural level. We shall then be able to get along without such restrictions. Even now, after some seventeen months of revolution, these restrictions are of very small practical importance.

These, comrades, are the main points on which I believed it necessary to dwell in the general discussion of the programme, in order to leave their further consideration to the debate. (*Applause.*)

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**SPEECH CLOSING THE DEBATE  
ON THE PARTY PROGRAMME  
MARCH 19**

(*Applause.*) Comrades, I could not divide this part of the question with Comrade Bukharin, after preliminary consultation in such detail as was the case with the report. Perhaps it will prove unnecessary. I think the debate that unfolded here revealed primarily one thing—the absence of any definite and formulated counter-proposal. Many speakers dealt with separate points in a desultory way, but made no counter-proposals. I shall deal with the chief objections, which were mainly directed against the preamble. Comrade Bukharin told me that he is one of those who believe that it is possible in the preamble to combine a description of capitalism with a description of imperialism in such a way as to form an integral whole, but since this has not been done, we shall have to accept the existing draft

Many of the speakers argued—and it was particularly emphasised by Comrade Podbelsky—that the draft presented to you is wrong. The arguments Comrade Podbelsky advanced were very strange indeed. For instance, he said that in Clause 1 the revolution is referred to as the revolution of such-and-such a date, and for some reason this suggested to Comrade Podbelsky the idea that even this revolution is numbered. I may say that in the Council of People's Commissars we have to deal with numerous documents with index numbers, and often we get a little tired of them. But why convey this impression here? What has an index number to do with the question? We fix the date of the holiday and celebrate it. Can it be denied that it was precisely on October 25 that we captured power? If you were to attempt to change this in any way, it would be artificial. If you call the revolution the October-November Revolution, you provide a pretext for saying that it was not accomplished in one day. Of course, it was accomplished in a longer period—not in October, not in November, and not even in one year. Comrade Podbelsky took exception to the fact that one of the clauses speaks of the *impending* social revolu-

tion. On these grounds he made it appear that the programme was guilty of the crime of "offending Her Majesty the social revolution". Here we are in the middle of the social revolution and yet the programme says that it is impending! This argument is obviously groundless, because the revolution referred to in our programme is the world social revolution.

We are told that we approach the revolution from the economic point of view. Should we do so or not? Many over-enthusiastic comrades here went as far as to talk about a world Economic Council, and about subordinating all the national parties to the Central Committee of the Russian Communist Party. Comrade Pyatakov almost went as far as to say the same. (*Pyatakov, from his place*: "Do you think that would be a bad thing?") Since he now says that it would not be a bad thing, I must reply that if there were anything like this in the programme, there would be no need to criticise it: the authors of such a proposal would have dug their own graves. These over-enthusiastic comrades have overlooked the fact that in the programme we must take our stand on what actually exists. One of these comrades—I think it was Sunita, who criticised the programme very vigorously and said it was worthless, and so forth—one of these over-enthusiastic comrades said that he did not agree that it must contain what actually exists, and proposed that it should contain what does not exist. (*Laughter.*) I think that this argument is so obviously false that the laughter it evokes is quite natural. I did not say that it must contain only what actually exists. I said that we must *proceed from what has been definitely established*. We must say and prove to the proletarians and working peasants that the communist revolution is inevitable. Did anybody here suggest that it is not necessary to say this? Had anybody made such a suggestion, it would have been proved to him that he was wrong. Nobody made any such suggestion, nor will anybody do so, because it is an undoubted fact that our Party came to power with the aid not only of the communist proletariat, but also of all the peasants. Shall we confine ourselves to telling these people who are now marching with us: "The Party's only function is to carry on socialist construction. The communist revolution has been accomplished, put communism into effect." Such an opinion would be utterly groundless, it would be wrong from the theoretical point of view. Our Party has absorbed directly, and still more indirectly, millions of people who are now beginning to understand the class struggle, to understand the transition from capitalism to communism.

It may now be said, and it would be no exaggeration at all to do so, of course, that nowhere, in no other country, have the working people displayed such keen interest in the question of transforming capitalism into socialism as the working people in

our country today. Our people are giving more thought to this than the people of any other country. Is the Party not to give a reply to this question? We must demonstrate scientifically how this communist revolution will progress. All the other proposals fall short in this respect. Nobody wanted to delete it entirely. There was some vague talk about it being possible to abbreviate it, about not quoting from the old programme because it is wrong. But if the old programme were wrong, how could it have served as the basis of our activities for so many years? Perhaps we shall have a common programme when the world Soviet Republic is set up; by that time we shall probably have drafted several more programmes. But it would be premature to draft one now, when only one Soviet Republic exists in what was formerly the Russian Empire. Even Finland, which is undoubtedly advancing towards a Soviet Republic, has not yet reached it. And yet the Finnish people are the most cultured of the peoples that inhabit what was formerly the Russian Empire. Consequently, it is utterly wrong to demand that the programme should now reflect a finished process. It would be on a par with inserting the demand for a world Economic Council. We ourselves have not yet grown accustomed to this ugly word Sovnarkhoz—Economic Council; as for foreigners, it is said that some of them searched the railway directory, thinking that there was a station of that name. (*Laughter.*) We cannot dictate such words to the whole world by means of decrees.

To be international, our programme must take into account the class factors which are characteristic of the economy of all countries. It is characteristic of all countries that capitalism is still developing in a great many places. This is true of the whole of Asia, of all countries which are advancing towards bourgeois democracy; it is true of a number of parts of Russia. For instance, Comrade Rykov, who is closely familiar with the facts in the economic field, told us of the new bourgeoisie which have arisen in our country. This is true. The bourgeoisie are emerging not only from among our Soviet government employees—only a very few can emerge from their ranks—but from the ranks of the peasants and handicraftsmen who have been liberated from the yoke of the capitalist banks, and who are now cut off from railway communication. This is a fact. How do you think you will get round this fact? You are only fostering your own illusions, or introducing badly digested book-learning into reality, which is far more complex. It shows that even in Russia, capitalist commodity production is alive, operating, developing and giving rise to a bourgeoisie, in the same way as it does in every capitalist society.

Comrade Rykov said, "We are fighting against the bourgeoisie who are springing up in our country because the peasant economy

has not yet disappeared; this economy gives rise to a bourgeoisie and to capitalism." We do not have exact figures about it, but it is beyond doubt that this is the case. So far a Soviet Republic exists only within the boundaries of what was formerly the Russian Empire. It is maturing and developing in a number of countries, but it does not yet exist in any other country. It would, therefore, be fantastic to claim in our programme something we have not yet reached; it would merely express a desire to escape unpleasant reality, which shows that the birth-pangs of other countries bringing forth socialist republics are undoubtedly more severe than those we experienced. We found it easy because on October 26, 1917, we gave legal effect to what the peasants had demanded in the resolutions of the Socialist-Revolutionary Party. This is not the case in any other country. A Swiss comrade and a German comrade told us that in Switzerland the peasants took up arms against the strikers as never before, and that in Germany there is not the faintest indications in the rural districts of the likelihood of the appearance of councils of agricultural labourers and small peasants. In our country, however, Soviets of Peasants' Deputies were formed almost over the entire country in the first few months of the revolution. We, a backward country, created them. Here a gigantic problem arises, for which the people in the capitalist countries have not yet found a solution. Were we a model capitalist nation? Survivals of serfdom were still to be found in this country right up to 1917. But no nation organised on capitalist lines has yet shown how this problem can be solved in practice. We achieved power under exceptional conditions, when tsarist despotism stimulated a great burst of effort to bring about a radical and rapid change; and under these exceptional conditions we were able for several months to rely on the support of all the peasants. This is a historical fact. Right up to the summer of 1918, up to the time of the formation of the Poor Peasants' Committees, we were holding on as a government because we enjoyed the support of all the peasants. This is impossible in any capitalist country. And it is this fundamental economic fact that you forget when you talk about radically redrafting the whole programme. Without this your programme will have no scientific foundation.

We must take as our point of departure the universally recognised Marxist thesis that a programme must be built on a scientific foundation. It must explain to the people how the communist revolution arose, why it is inevitable, what its significance, nature, and power are, and what problems it must solve. Our programme must be a summary for agitational purposes, a summary such as all programmes were, such as, for instance, the Erfurt Programme<sup>84</sup> was. Every clause of that

programme contained material for agitators to use in hundreds of thousands of speeches and articles. Every clause of our programme is something that every working man and woman must know, assimilate and understand. If they do not know what capitalism is, if they do not understand that small peasant and handicraft economy constantly, inevitably and necessarily engenders this capitalism—if they do not understand this, then even if they were to declare themselves Communists a hundred times and flaunt the most radical communism, it would not be worth a brass farthing, because we value communism only when it is based on economic facts.

The socialist revolution will cause many changes even in some of the advanced countries. The capitalist mode of production still exists in all parts of the world, and in many places it still bears its less developed forms in spite of the fact that imperialism has mobilised and concentrated finance capital. There is not a country in the world, even the most developed, where capitalism is to be found exclusively in its most perfect form. There is nothing like it even in Germany. When we were collecting material for our particular assignments, the comrade in charge of the Central Statistical Board informed us that in Germany the peasants *concealed* from the Food Supply Departments 40 per cent of their surplus potatoes. Small peasant farms, which engage in free, petty trading, and petty profiteering, are still to be found in a capitalist country where capitalism has reached its full development. Such facts must not be forgotten. Of the 300,000 members of the Party who are represented here, are there many who fully understand this question? It would be ridiculous conceit to imagine that because we, whose good fortune it was to draft this programme, understand all this, the entire mass of Communists also understands it. They do not, and they need this ABC. They need it a hundred times more than we do, because people who have not grasped, who have not understood what communism is and what commodity production is, are far removed from communism. We come across these cases of small commodity economy every day, in every question of practical economic policy, food policy, agricultural policy, on matters concerning the Supreme Economic Council. And yet we are told that we ought not to speak about it in the programme! If we heeded this advice we would only show that we are incapable of solving this problem, and that the success of the revolution in our country is due to exceptional circumstances.

Comrades from Germany visit us to study the forms of the socialist system. And we must act in such a way as to prove to our comrades from abroad that we are strong, to enable them to see that in our revolution we are not in the least exceeding the bounds

of reality, and to provide them with material that will be absolutely irrefutable. It would be absurd to set up our revolution as the ideal for all countries, to imagine that it has made a number of brilliant discoveries and has introduced a heap of socialist innovations. I have not heard anybody make this claim and I assert that we shall not hear anybody make it. We have acquired practical experience in taking the first steps towards destroying capitalism in a country where specific relations exist between the proletariat and the peasants. Nothing more. If we behave like the frog in the fable and become puffed up with conceit, we shall only make ourselves the laughing-stock of the world, we shall be mere braggarts.

We educated the party of the proletariat with the aid of the Marxist programme, and the tens of millions of working people in our country must be educated in the same way. We have assembled here as ideological leaders and we must say to the people: "We educated the proletariat, and in doing so we always took our stand first and foremost on an exact economic analysis." This cannot be done by means of a manifesto. The manifesto of the Third International is an appeal, a proclamation, it calls attention to the tasks that confront us, it is an appeal to the people's sentiments. Take the trouble to prove scientifically that you have an economic basis, and that you are not building on sand. If you cannot do that, do not undertake to draw up a programme. To do it, we must necessarily review what we have lived through in these fifteen years. Fifteen years ago we said that we were advancing towards the social revolution, and now we have arrived: does that fact weaken our position? On the contrary, it reinforces and strengthens it. It all amounts to this, that capitalism is developing into imperialism, and imperialism leads to the beginning of the socialist revolution. It is tedious and lengthy, and not a single capitalist country has yet gone through this process, but it is necessary to deal with this in the programme.

That is why the theoretical arguments that have been levelled against this hold no water. I have no doubt that if we were to set ten or twenty writers, who are well able to expound their ideas, to work for three or four hours a day, they would, in the course of a month, draw up a better and more integral programme. But to demand that this should be done in a day or two, as Comrade Podbelsky does, is ridiculous. We worked for more than a day or two, or even a couple of weeks. I repeat that if it were possible to select a commission of thirty persons and set them to work several hours a day for a month, and moreover, not allow them to be disturbed by telephone calls, there can be no doubt that they would produce a programme five times better



than this one. But nobody here has disputed essentials. A programme which says nothing about the fundamentals of commodity economy and capitalism will not be a Marxist international programme. To be international it is not enough for it to proclaim a world Soviet republic, or the abolition of nations, as Comrade Pyatakov did when he said: "We don't want any nations. What we want is the union of all proletarians." This is splendid, of course, and eventually it will come about, but at an entirely different stage of communist development. Comrade Pyatakov said in a patronising tone: "You were backward in 1917, but you have made progress." We made progress when we put into the programme something that began to conform to reality. When we said that nations advance from bourgeois democracy to proletarian government, we stated what was a fact, although in 1917 it was merely an expression of what you desired.

When we establish with the Spartacists that complete comradesly confidence needed for united communism, the comradesly confidence that is maturing day by day, and which, perhaps, will come into being in a few months' time, we shall record it in the programme. But to proclaim it when it does not yet exist, would mean dragging them into something for which their own experience has not yet prepared them. We say that the Soviet type has acquired international significance. Comrade Bukharin mentioned the Shop Stewards' Committees in Britain. These are not quite Soviets. They are developing but they are still in the embryonic stage. When they burst into full bloom, we shall "see what happens". But the argument that we are presenting Russian Soviets to the British workers is beyond all criticism.

I must now deal with the question of self-determination of nations. Our criticism has served to exaggerate the importance of this question. The defect in our criticism was that it attached special significance to this question, which, in substance, is of less than secondary importance in the programme's general structure, in the sum total of programme demands.

While Comrade Pyatakov was speaking I was amazed and asked myself what it was, a debate on the programme, or a dispute between two Organising Bureaus? When Comrade Pyatakov said that the Ukrainian Communists act in conformity with the instructions of the Central Committee of the R.C.P.(B.), I was not sure about the tone in which he said it. Was it regret? I do not suspect Comrade Pyatakov of that, but what he said was tantamount to asking what was the good of all this self-determination when we have a splendid Central Committee in Moscow. This is a childish point of view. The Ukraine was separated from Russia by exceptional circumstances, and the national movement did not take deep root there. Whatever there was of such a move-

ment the Germans killed. This is a fact, but an exceptional fact. Even as regards the language it is not clear whether the Ukrainian language today is the language of the common people or not. The mass of working people of the other nations greatly distrusted the Great Russians whom they regarded as a kulak and oppressor nation. That is a fact. A Finnish representative told me that among the Finnish bourgeoisie, who hated the Great Russians, voices are to be heard saying: "The Germans proved to be more savage brutes, the Entente proved to be more savage, we had better have the Bolsheviks." This is the tremendous victory we have gained over the Finnish bourgeoisie in the national question. This does not in the least prevent us from fighting it as our class enemy and from choosing the proper methods for the purpose. The Soviet Republic, which has been established in the country where tsarism formerly oppressed Finland, must declare that it respects the right of nations to independence. We concluded a treaty<sup>85</sup> with the short-lived Red Finnish Government and agreed to certain territorial concessions, to which I heard quite a number of utterly chauvinistic objections, such as: "There are excellent fisheries there, and you have surrendered them." These are the kind of objections which induce me to say, "Scratch some Communists and you will find Great-Russian chauvinists."

I think that the case of Finland, as well as of the Bashkirs, shows that in dealing with the national question one cannot argue that economic unity should be effected under all circumstances. Of course, it is necessary! But we must endeavour to secure it by propaganda, by agitation, by a voluntary alliance. The Bashkirs distrust the Great Russians because the Great Russians are more cultured and have utilised their culture to rob the Bashkirs. That is why the term Great Russian is synonymous with the terms "oppressor", "rogue" to Bashkirs in those remote places. This must be taken into account, it must be combated, but it will be a lengthy process. It cannot be eliminated by a decree. We must be very cautious in this matter. Exceptional caution must be displayed by a nation like the Great Russians, who earned the bitter hatred of all the other nations: we have only just learned how to remedy the situation, and then, not entirely. For instance, at the Commissariat of Education, or connected with it, there are Communists, who say that our schools are uniform schools, and therefore don't dare to teach in any language but Russian! In my opinion, such a Communist is a Great-Russian chauvinist. Many of us harbour such sentiments and they must be combated.

That is why we must tell the other nations that we are out-and-out internationalists and are striving for the voluntary alliance of the workers and peasants of all nations. This does not preclude wars in the least. War is another question, and arises

out of the very nature of imperialism. If we are fighting Wilson, and Wilson uses a small nation as his tool, we say that we shall oppose that tool. We have never said anything different. We have never said that a socialist republic can exist without military forces. War may be necessary under certain circumstances. But at present, the essence of the question of the self-determination of nations is that different nations are advancing in the same historical direction, but by very different zigzags and by-paths, and that the more cultured nations are obviously proceeding in a way that differs from that of the less cultured nations. Finland advanced in a different way. Germany is advancing in a different way. Comrade Pyatakov is a thousand times right when he says that we need unity. But we must strive for it by means of propaganda, by Party influence, by forming united trade unions. But here, too, we must not act in a stereotyped way. If we do away with this point, or formulate it differently, we shall be deleting the national question from the programme. This might be done if there were people with no specific national features. But there are no such people, and we cannot build socialist society in any other way.

I think, comrades, that the programme proposed here should be accepted as a basis and then referred back to the commission, which should be enlarged by the inclusion of representatives of the opposition, or rather, of comrades who have made practical proposals, and that the commission should put forward (1) the amendments to the draft that have been enumerated, and (2) the theoretical objections on which no agreement can be reached. I think this will be the most practical way of dealing with the matter, and one that will most speedily lead to a correct decision (*Applause.*)

## REPORT ON WORK IN THE COUNTRYSIDE MARCH 23

(*Prolonged applause.*) Comrades, I must apologise for having been unable to attend all the meetings of the committee elected by the Congress to consider the question of work in the countryside. My report will therefore be supplemented by the speeches of comrades who have taken part in the work of the committee from the very beginning. The committee finally drew up theses which were turned over to a commission and which will be reported on to you. I should like to dwell on the general significance of the question as it confronts us following the work of the committee and as, in my opinion, it now confronts the whole Party.

Comrades, it is quite natural that as the proletarian revolution develops we have to put in the forefront first one then another of the most complex and important problems of social life. It is perfectly natural that in a revolution which affects, and is bound to affect, the deepest foundations of life and the broadest mass of the population, not a single party, not a single government, no matter how close it may be to the people, can possibly embrace all aspects of life *at once*. And if we now have to deal with the question of work in the countryside, and in connection with this question to give prominence to the position of the middle peasants, there is nothing strange or abnormal in this from the standpoint of the development of the proletarian revolution in general. It is natural that the proletarian revolution had to begin with the fundamental relation between two hostile classes, the proletariat and the bourgeoisie. The principal task was to transfer power to the working class, to secure its dictatorship, to overthrow the bourgeoisie and to deprive them of the economic sources of their power which would undoubtedly be a hindrance to all socialist construction in general. Since we are acquainted with Marxism, none of us have ever for a moment doubted the truth of the thesis that the very economic structure of capitalist society is such that the

deciding factor in that society must be either the proletariat or the bourgeoisie. We now see many former Marxists—from the Menshevik camp, for example—who assert that in a period of decisive struggle between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie *democracy in general* can prevail. This is what is said by the Mensheviks, who have come to a complete agreement with the Socialist-Revolutionaries. As though it were not the bourgeoisie themselves who create or abolish democracy as they find most convenient for themselves! And since that is so, there can be no question of democracy in general at a time of acute struggle between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat. It is astonishing how rapidly these Marxists or pseudo-Marxists—our Mensheviks, for example—expose themselves, and how rapidly their true nature, the nature of petty-bourgeois democrats, comes to the surface.

All his life Marx fought most of all the illusions of petty-bourgeois democracy and bourgeois democracy. Marx scoffed most of all at empty talk of freedom and equality, when it serves as a screen for the freedom of the workers to starve to death, or the equality between the one who sells his labour-power and the bourgeois who allegedly freely purchases that labour in the open market as if from an equal, and so forth. Marx explains this in all his economic works. It may be said that the whole of Marx's *Capital* is devoted to explaining the truth that *the basic forces of capitalist society are, and must be, the bourgeoisie and the proletariat*—bourgeoisie, as the builder of this capitalist society, as its leader, as its motive force, and the proletariat, as its grave-digger and as the only force capable of replacing it. You can hardly find a single chapter in any of Marx's works that is not devoted to this. You might say that all over the world the socialists of the Second International have vowed and sworn to the workers time and again that they understand this truth. But when matters reached the stage of the real and, moreover, decisive struggle for power between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie we find that our Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries, as well as the leaders of the old socialist parties all over the world, forgot this truth and began to repeat in purely parrot fashion the philistine phrases about democracy in general.

Attempts are sometimes made to lend these words what is considered to be greater force by speaking of the "dictatorship of democracy". That is sheer nonsense. We know perfectly well from history that the dictatorship of the democratic bourgeoisie meant nothing but the suppression of the insurgent workers. That has been the case ever since 1848—at any rate, beginning no later, and isolated examples may be found even earlier. History shows that it is precisely in a bourgeois democracy that a most acute struggle between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie

develops extensively and freely. We have had occasion to convince ourselves of this truth in practice. And the measures taken by the Soviet Government since October 1917 have been distinguished by their firmness on all fundamental questions precisely because we have never departed from this truth and have never forgotten it. The issue of the struggle for supremacy waged against the bourgeoisie can be settled only by the dictatorship of one class—the proletariat. Only the dictatorship of the proletariat can defeat the bourgeoisie. Only the proletariat can overthrow the bourgeoisie. And only the proletariat can secure the following of the people in the struggle against the bourgeoisie.

However, it by no means follows from this—and it would be a profound mistake to think it does—that in further building communism, when the bourgeoisie have been overthrown and political power is already in the hands of the proletariat, we can continue to carry on without the participation of the middle, intermediary elements.

It is natural that at the beginning of the revolution—the proletarian revolution—the whole attention of its active participants should be concentrated on the main and fundamental issue, the supremacy of the proletariat and the securing of that supremacy by a victory over the bourgeoisie—making it certain that the bourgeoisie cannot regain power. We are well aware that the bourgeoisie still enjoy the advantages derived from the wealth they possess in other countries or the monetary wealth they possess, sometimes even in our own country. We are well aware that there are social elements who are more experienced than proletarians and who aid the bourgeoisie. We are well aware that the bourgeoisie have not abandoned the idea of returning to power and have not ceased attempting to restore their supremacy.

But that is by no means all. The bourgeoisie, who put forward most insistently the principle “my country is wherever it is good for me”, and who, as far as money is concerned, have always been international—the *bourgeoisie internationally are still stronger than we are*. Their supremacy is being rapidly undermined, they are being confronted with such facts as the Hungarian revolution—about which we were happy to inform you yesterday and are today receiving confirming reports—and they are beginning to understand that their supremacy is shaky. They no longer enjoy freedom of action. But now if you take into account the material means on the world scale, we cannot help admitting that in the material respect the bourgeoisie are at present still stronger than we are.

That is why nine-tenths of our attention and our practical activities were devoted, and had to be devoted, to this fundamental question—the overthrow of the bourgeoisie, the

establishment of the power of the proletariat and the elimination of every possibility of the return of the bourgeoisie to power. That is perfectly natural, legitimate, and unavoidable, and in this field very much has been accomplished.

Now, however, we must decide the question of other sections of the population. We must—and this was our unanimous conclusion in the agrarian committee, and on this, we are convinced, all Party workers will agree, because we merely summed up the results of their observations—we must now decide *the question of the middle peasants* in its totality.

Of course, there are people who, instead of studying the course taken by our revolution, instead of giving thought to the tasks now confronting us, instead of all this, make every step of the Soviet government a butt for the derision and criticism of the type we hear from those gentlemen, the Mensheviks and the Right Socialist-Revolutionaries. These people have still not understood that they must make a choice between us and the bourgeois dictatorship. We have displayed great patience, even indulgence, towards these people. We shall allow them to enjoy our indulgence once more. But in the very near future we shall set a limit to our patience and indulgence, and if they do not make their choice, we shall tell them in all seriousness to go to Kolchak. (*Applause.*) We do not expect particularly brilliant intellectual ability from such people (*Laughter.*) But it might have been expected that after experiencing the bestialities of Kolchak they ought to understand that we are entitled to demand that they should choose between us and Kolchak. If during the first few months that followed the October Revolution there were many naive people who were stupid enough to believe that the dictatorship of the proletariat was something transient and fortuitous, today even the Mensheviks and the Socialist Revolutionaries ought to understand that there is something logically necessary in the struggle that is being waged because of the onslaught of the whole international bourgeoisie.

Actually only two forces have been created—the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie and the dictatorship of the proletariat. Whoever has not learned this from Marx, whoever has not learned this from the works of all the great socialists, has never been a socialist, has never understood anything about socialism, and has only called himself a socialist. We are allowing these people a brief period for reflection and demand that they make their decision. I have mentioned them because they are now saying or will say: "The Bolsheviks have raised the question of the middle peasants, they want to make advances to them." I am very well aware that considerable space is given in the Menshevik press to arguments of this kind, and even far worse. We ignore such arguments, we

never attach importance to the jabber of our adversaries. People who are still capable of running to and fro between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat may say what they please. We are following our own road.

Our road is determined above all by considerations of class forces. A struggle is developing in capitalist society between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat. As long as that struggle has not ended we shall give our keenest attention to fighting it out to the end. It has not yet been brought to the end, although in that struggle much has already been accomplished. The hands of the international bourgeoisie are no longer free: the best proof of this is that the Hungarian proletarian revolution has taken place. It is therefore clear that our rural organisational work has already gone beyond the limits to which it was confined when everything was subordinated to the fundamental demand of the struggle for power.

This development passed through two main phases. In October 1917 we seized power *together with the peasants as a whole*. This was a bourgeois revolution, inasmuch as the class struggle in the rural districts had not yet developed. As I have said, the real proletarian revolution in the rural districts began only in the summer of 1918. Had we not succeeded in stirring up this revolution our work would have been incomplete. The first stage was the seizure of power in the cities and the establishment of the Soviet form of government. The second stage was one which is fundamental for all socialists and without which socialists are not socialists, namely, to single out the proletarian and semi-proletarian elements in the rural districts and to ally them to the urban proletariat in order to wage the struggle against the bourgeoisie in the countryside. This stage is also in the main completed. The organisations we originally created for this purpose, the Poor Peasants' Committees, had become so consolidated that we found it possible to replace them by properly elected Soviets, i.e., to reorganise the village Soviets so as to make them the organs of class rule, the organs of proletarian power in the rural districts. Such measures as the law on socialist land settlement and the measures for the transition to socialist farming, which was passed not very long ago by the Central Executive Committee and with which everybody is, of course, familiar, sum up our experience from the point of view of our proletarian revolution.

The main thing, the prime and basic task of the proletarian revolution, we have already accomplished. And precisely because we have accomplished it, a more complicated problem has come to the fore—*our attitude towards the middle peasants*. And whoever thinks that the prominence being given this problem is in any way symptomatic of a weakening of the character of our



government, of a weakening of the dictatorship of the proletariat, that it is symptomatic of a change, however partial, however minute, in our basic policy, completely fails to understand the aims of the proletariat and the aims of the communist revolution. I am convinced that there are no such people in our Party. I only wanted to warn the comrades against people not belonging to the workers' party who will talk in this way, not because it follows from any system of ideas, but because they merely want to spoil things for us and to help the whiteguards—or, to put it more simply, to incite against us the middle peasant, who is always vacillating, who cannot help vacillating, and who will continue to vacillate for a fairly long time to come. In order to incite the middle peasant against us they will say, "See, they are making advances to you! That means they have taken your revolts into account, they are beginning to wobble", and so on and so forth. All our comrades must be armed against agitation of this kind. And I am certain that they will be armed—provided we succeed now in having this question treated from the standpoint of the class struggle.

It is perfectly obvious that this fundamental problem—*how precisely to define the attitude of the proletariat towards the middle peasants*—is a more complex but no less urgent problem. Comrades, from the theoretical point of view, which has been mastered by the vast majority of the workers, this question presents no difficulty to Marxists. I will remind you, for instance, that in his book on the agrarian question, written at a time when he was still correctly expounding the teachings of Marx and was regarded as an undisputed authority in this field, Kautsky states in connection with the transition from capitalism to socialism that the task of a socialist party is to *neutralise the peasants*, i.e., to see to it that in the struggle between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie the peasant should remain neutral and should not be able to give active assistance to the bourgeoisie against us.

Throughout the extremely long period of the rule of the bourgeoisie, the peasants sided with the bourgeoisie and supported their power. This will be understood if you consider the economic strength of the bourgeoisie and the political instruments of their rule. We cannot count on the middle peasant coming over to our side immediately. But if we pursue a correct policy, after a time these vacillations will cease and the peasant will be able to come over to our side.

It was Engels—who together with Marx laid the foundations of scientific Marxism, that is, the teachings by which our Party has always guided itself, and particularly in time of revolution—it was Engels who established the division of the peasants into small peasants, middle peasants, and big peasants, and this

division holds good for most European countries even today. Engels said, "Perhaps it will not everywhere be necessary to suppress even the big peasant by force." And that we might ever use force in respect of the middle peasant (the small peasant is our friend) is a thought that has never occurred to any sensible socialist. That is what Engels said in 1894, a year before his death, when the agrarian question came to the fore.<sup>86</sup> This point of view expresses a truth which is sometimes forgotten, but with which we are all in theory agreed. In relation to the landowners and the capitalists our aim is complete expropriation. *But we shall not tolerate any use of force in respect of the middle peasants.* Even in respect of the rich peasants we do not say as resolutely as we do of the bourgeoisie—absolute expropriation of the rich peasants and the kulaks. This distinction is made in our programme. We say that the resistance of the counter-revolutionary efforts of the rich peasants must be suppressed. That is not complete expropriation.

The basic difference in our attitude towards the bourgeoisie and the middle peasant—complete expropriation of the bourgeoisie and an alliance with the middle peasant who does not exploit others—this basic line is accepted by everybody in theory. But this line is not consistently followed in practice; the people in the localities have not yet learned to follow it. When, after having overthrown the bourgeoisie and consolidated its own power, the proletariat started from various angles to create a new society, the question of the middle peasant came to the fore. Not a single socialist in the world denied that the building of communism would take different courses in countries where large-scale farming prevails and in countries where small-scale farming prevails. That is an elementary truth, an ABC. And from this truth it follows that as we approach the problems of communist construction our principal attention must to a certain extent be concentrated precisely on the middle peasant.

Much will depend on how we define our attitude towards the middle peasant. Theoretically, that question has been solved; but we know perfectly well from our own experience that there is a difference between solving a problem theoretically and putting the solution into practice. We are now directly confronted with that difference, which was so characteristic of the great French Revolution, when the French Convention launched into sweeping measures but did not possess the necessary support to put them into effect, and did not even know on what class to rely for the implementation of any particular measure.

Our position is an infinitely more fortunate one. Thanks to a whole century of development, we know on which class we are relying. But we also know that the practical experience of that class is extremely inadequate. The fundamental aim was clear

to the working class and the workers' party—to overthrow the power of the bourgeoisie and to transfer power to the workers. But *how* was that to be done? Everyone remembers with what difficulty and at the cost of how many mistakes we passed from workers' control to workers' management of industry. And yet that was work within our own class, among the proletarians, with whom we had always had to deal. But now we are called upon to define our attitude towards a new class, a class the urban worker does not know. We have to determine our attitude towards a class which has no definite and stable position. The proletariat in the mass is in favour of socialism, the bourgeoisie in the mass are opposed to socialism. It is easy to determine the relations between these two classes. But when we come up against people like the middle peasants we find that *they are a class that vacillates*. The middle peasant is partly a property-owner and partly a working man. He does not exploit other working people. For decades the middle peasant defended his position with the greatest difficulty, he suffered the exploitation of the landowners and the capitalists, he bore everything. Yet he is a property-owner. Our attitude towards this vacillating class therefore presents enormous difficulties. In the light of more than a year's experience, in the light of more than six month's proletarian work in the rural districts, and in the light of the class differentiation in the rural districts that has already taken place, we must most of all beware here lest we are too hasty, lest we are inadequately theoretical, lest we regard what is in process of being accomplished, but has not yet been realised, as having been accomplished. In the resolution which is being proposed to you by the commission elected by the committee, and which will be read to you by a subsequent speaker, you will find sufficient warning against this.

From the economic point of view, it is obvious that we must help the middle peasant. Theoretically, there is no doubt of this. But because of our habits, our level of culture, the inadequacy of the cultural and technical forces we are in a position to place at the disposal of the rural districts, and because of the helpless manner in which we often approach the rural districts, comrades frequently resort to coercion and thus spoil everything. Only yesterday a comrade gave me a pamphlet entitled *Instructions and Regulations on Party Work in Nizhni-Novgorod Gubernia*, issued by the Nizhni-Novgorod Committee of the Russian Communist Party (Bolsheviks), and in this pamphlet, for example, I find this on p. 41: "The whole burden of the emergency tax decree must be placed on the shoulders of the village kulaks and profiteers and *the middle element of the peasants generally*." Well, well! These people have indeed "understood". This is either a printer's error—and it is impermissible that such print-

er's errors should be made—or a piece of rushed, hasty work, which shows how dangerous all haste is in this matter. Or—and this is the worst surmise of all, one I would not like to make with regard to the Nizhni-Novgorod comrades—they have simply failed to understand. It may very well be that it is an oversight.<sup>87</sup>

We have, in practice, cases like the one related by a comrade in the commission. He was surrounded by peasants, and every one of them asked: "Tell me, am I a middle peasant or not? I have two horses and one cow. . . . I have two cows and one horse", etc. And this agitator, who tours the uyezds, is expected to possess an infallible thermometer with which to gauge every peasant and say whether he is a middle peasant or not. To do that you must know the whole history of the given peasant's farm, his relation to higher and lower groups—and we cannot know that accurately.

Considerable practical ability and knowledge of local conditions are required here, and we do not yet possess them. You need not be ashamed to confess it; it must be admitted frankly. We were never utopians and never imagined that we would build communist society with the immaculate hands of immaculate Communists, born and educated in an immaculately communist society. That is a fairy-tale. We have to build communism out of the debris of capitalism, and only the class which has been steeled in the struggle against capitalism can do that. The proletariat, as you are very well aware, is not free from the shortcomings and weaknesses of capitalist society. It is fighting for socialism, but at the same time it is fighting against its own shortcomings. The best and foremost section of the proletariat, which carried on a desperate struggle in the cities for decades, was in a position to acquire in the course of that struggle the culture of life in the capital and other cities, and to a certain extent did acquire it. You know that even in advanced countries the rural districts were condemned to ignorance. Of course, we shall raise the level of culture in the rural districts, but that will be the work of many, many years, that is what our comrades everywhere are forgetting and what is being strikingly brought home to us by every word uttered by people who come from the rural districts; not by the intellectuals who work here, not by the officials—we have listened to them a lot—but by people who have in practice observed the work in the rural districts. It was these opinions that we found particularly valuable in the agrarian committee. These opinions will be particularly valuable now—I am convinced of that—for the whole Party Congress, for they come not from books, and not from decrees, but from experience.

All this obliges us to work for the purpose of introducing the greatest possible clarity into our attitude towards the middle peasant. This is very difficult, because *such clarity does not exist*

*in reality*. Not only is this problem unsolved, it is *insoluble*, if you want to solve it *immediately and all at once*. There are people who say that there was no need to write so many decrees. They blame the Soviet Government for setting about writing decrees without knowing how they were to be put into effect. These people, as a matter of fact, do not realise that they are sinking to the whiteguard position. If we had expected that life in the rural districts could be completely changed by writing a hundred decrees, we would have been absolute idiots. But if we had refrained from indicating in decrees the road that must be followed, we would have been traitors to socialism. These decrees, while in practice they could not be carried into effect fully and immediately, played an important part as propaganda. While formerly we carried on our propaganda by means of general truths, *we are now carrying on our propaganda by our work*. That is also preaching, but it is preaching by action—only not action in the sense of the isolated sallies of some upstarts, at which we scoffed so much in the era of the anarchists and the socialism of the old type. Our decree is a call, but not the old call “Workers, arise and overthrow the bourgeoisie!” No, it is a call to the people, it calls them to practical work. *Decrees are instructions which call for practical work on a mass scale*. That is what is important. Let us assume that decrees do contain much that is useless, much that in practice cannot be put into effect; but they contain material for practical action, and the purpose of a decree is to teach practical steps to the hundreds, thousands, and millions of people who heed the voice of the Soviet government. This is a trial in practical action in the sphere of socialist construction in the rural districts. If we treat matters in this way we shall acquire a good deal from the sum total of our laws, decrees, and ordinances. We shall not regard them as absolute injunctions which must be put into effect instantly and at all costs.

We must avoid everything that in practice may tend to encourage individual abuses. In places careerists and adventurers have attached themselves to us like leeches, people who call themselves Communists and are deceiving us, and who have wormed their way into our ranks because the Communists are now in power, and because the more honest government employees refused to come and work with us on account of their retrograde ideas, while careerists have no ideas, and no honesty. These people, whose only aim is to make a career, resort in the localities to coercion, and imagine they are doing a good thing. But in fact the result of this at times is that the peasants say, “Long live Soviet power, but *down with the communia!*” (i.e., communism). This is not an invention; these facts are taken from real life, from the reports of comrades in the localities. We must

not forget what enormous damage is always caused by lack of moderation, by all rashness, and haste.

We had to hurry and, by taking a desperate leap, to get out of the imperialist war at any cost, for it had brought us to the verge of collapse. We had to make most desperate efforts to crush the bourgeoisie and the forces that were threatening to crush us. All this was necessary, without this we could not have triumphed. But if we were to act in the same way towards the middle peasant it would be such idiocy, such stupidity, it would be so ruinous to our cause, that only provocateurs could deliberately act in such a way. The aim here must be an entirely different one. Here our aim is not to smash the resistance of obvious exploiters, to defeat and overthrow them—which was the aim we previously set ourselves. No, now that this main purpose has been accomplished, more complicated problems arise. You cannot create anything here by coercion. *Coercion applied to the middle peasants would cause untold harm.* This section is a numerous one, it consists of millions of individuals. Even in Europe, where it nowhere reaches such numbers, where technology and culture, urban life and railways are tremendously developed, and where it would be easiest of all to think of such a thing, nobody, not even the most revolutionary of socialists, has ever proposed adopting measures of coercion towards the middle peasant.

When we were taking power we relied on the support of the peasants as a whole. At that time the aim of all the peasants was the same—to fight the landowners. But their prejudice against large-scale farming has remained to this day. The peasant thinks that if there is a big farm, that means he will again be a farm-hand. That, of course, is a mistake. But the peasant's idea of large-scale farming is associated with a feeling of hatred and the memory of how landowners used to oppress the people. That feeling still remains, it has not yet died.

We must particularly stress the truth that here by the very nature of the case coercive methods can accomplish nothing. The economic task here is an entirely different one; there is no upper layer that can be cut off, leaving the foundation and the building intact. That upper layer which in the cities was represented by the capitalists does not exist in the villages. *Here coercion would ruin the whole cause.* Prolonged educational work is required. We have to give the peasant, who not only in our country but all over the world is a practical man and a realist, concrete examples to prove that the "communia" is the best possible thing. Of course, nothing will come of it if hasty individuals flit down to a village from a city to chatter and stir up a number of intellectual-like and at times unintellectual-like squabbles,

and then quarrel with everyone and go their way. That sometimes happens. Instead of evoking respect, they evoke ridicule, and deservedly so.

On this question we must say that we do encourage communes, but they must be so organised *as to gain the confidence of the peasants*. And until then we are pupils of the peasants and not their teachers. Nothing is more stupid than people who know nothing about farming and its specific features, rushing to the village only because they have heard of the advantages of socialised farming, are tired of urban life and desire to work in rural districts—it is most stupid for such people to regard themselves as teachers of the peasants in every respect. *Nothing is more stupid than the very idea of applying coercion in economic relations with the middle peasant.*

The aim is not to expropriate the middle peasant but to bear in mind the specific conditions in which the peasant lives, to learn from him methods of transition to a better system, *and not to dare to give orders!* That is the rule we have set ourselves. (*General applause.*) That is the rule we have endeavoured to set forth in our draft resolution, for in that respect, comrades, we have indeed sinned a great deal. We are by no means ashamed to confess it. We were inexperienced. Our very struggle against the exploiters was taken from experience. If we have sometimes been condemned on account of it, we can say, "Dear capitalist gentlemen, you have only yourselves to blame. If you had not offered such savage, senseless, insolent, and desperate resistance, if you had not joined in an alliance with the world bourgeoisie, the revolution would have assumed more peaceful forms." Now that we have repulsed the savage onslaught on all sides we can change to other methods, because we are acting not as a narrow circle, but as a party which **is** leading the millions. The millions cannot immediately understand a change of course, and so it frequently happens that blows aimed at the kulaks fall on the middle peasants. That is not surprising. It must only be understood that this is due to historical conditions which have now been outlived and that the new conditions and the new tasks in relation to this class demand a new psychology.

Our decrees on peasant farming are in the main correct. We have no grounds for renouncing a single one of them, or for regretting a single one of them. But if the decrees are right, *it is wrong to impose them on the peasants by force*. That is not contained in a single decree. They are right inasmuch as they indicate the roads to follow, inasmuch as they call to practical measures. When we say, "Encourage associations", we are giving instructions which must be tested many times before the final *form* in which to put them into effect is found. When it is stated that we must strive to gain the peasants' voluntary consent, it means

that they must be persuaded, and persuaded by practical deeds. They will not allow themselves to be convinced by mere words, and they are perfectly right in that. It would be a bad thing if they allowed themselves to be convinced merely by reading decrees and agitational leaflets. If it were possible to reshape economic life in this way, such reshaping would not be worth a brass farthing. It must first be proved that such association is better, people must be united in such a way that they become actually united and are not at odds with each other—it must be proved that association is advantageous. That is the way the peasant puts the question and that is the way our decrees put it. If we have not been able to achieve that so far, there is nothing to be ashamed of and we must admit it frankly.

We have so far accomplished only the fundamental task of every socialist revolution—that of defeating the bourgeoisie. That in the main has been accomplished, although an extremely difficult half-year is beginning in which the imperialists of the world are making a last attempt to crush us. We can now say without in the least exaggerating that *they themselves understand that after this half-year their cause will be absolutely hopeless*. Either they take advantage now of our state of exhaustion and defeat us, an isolated country, or we emerge victorious not merely in regard to our country alone. In this half-year, in which the food crisis has been aggravated by a transport crisis, and in which the imperialist powers are endeavouring to attack us on several fronts, our situation is extremely difficult. But *this is the last difficult half-year*. We must continue to mobilise all our forces in the struggle against the external enemy who is attacking us.

But when we speak of the aims of our work in the rural districts, in spite of all the difficulties and in spite of the fact that our experience has been wholly concerned with the immediate task of crushing the exploiters, we must remember, and never forget, that our aims in the rural districts, in relation to the middle peasant, are entirely different.

All the class-conscious workers—from Petrograd, Ivanovo-Voznesensk, or Moscow—who have been to the rural districts related examples of how a number of misunderstandings which appeared to be irremovable, and a number of conflicts which appeared to be very serious, were removed or mitigated when intelligent working men came forward and spoke, not in the bookish language, but in a language understood by the peasants, when they spoke not as commanders who take the liberty of giving orders without knowing anything of rural life, but as comrades, explaining the situation and appealing to their sentiments as working people against the exploiters. And by such comradely explanation they accomplished what could not be accomplished by



hundreds of others who conducted themselves like commanders and superiors.

That is the spirit that permeates the resolution we are now submitting to you.

I have endeavoured in my brief report to dwell on the underlying principles, on the general political significance of this resolution. I have endeavoured to show—and I should like to think that I have succeeded—that from the point of view of the interests of the revolution as a whole we are making no change of policy, we are not changing the line. The whiteguards and their henchmen are shouting, or will shout, that we are. Let them shout. We do not care. We are pursuing our aims in a most consistent manner. We must transfer our attention from the aim of suppressing the bourgeoisie to the aim of arranging the life of the middle peasant. We must live in peace with him. In a communist society the middle peasants will be on our side only when we alleviate and improve their economic conditions. If tomorrow we could supply one hundred thousand first-class tractors, provide them with fuel, provide them with drivers—you know very well that this at present is sheer fantasy—the middle peasant would say, “I am for the communia” (i.e., for communism). But in order to do that we must first defeat the international bourgeoisie, we must compel them to give us these tractors, or so develop our productive forces as to be able to provide them ourselves. That is the only correct way to pose this question.

The peasant needs the industry of the towns; he cannot live without it, and it is in our hands. If we set about the task properly, the peasant will be grateful to us for bringing him these products, these implements and this culture from the towns. They will be brought to him not by exploiters, not by landowners, but by his fellow-workers, whom he values very highly, but values in a practical manner, for the actual help they give, at the same time rejecting—and quite rightly rejecting—all domineering and “orders” from above.

First help, and then endeavour to win confidence. If you set about this task correctly, if every step taken by every one of our groups in the uyezds, the volosts, the food procurement groups, and in every other organisation is made properly, if every step of ours is carefully checked from this point of view, we shall gain the confidence of the peasant, and only then shall we be able to proceed farther. What we must now do is to help him and advise him. This will not be the orders of a commander, but the advice of a comrade. The peasant will then be entirely on our side.

This, comrades, is what is contained in our resolution, and this, in my opinion, must become the decision of the Congress. If

we adopt this, if it serves to determine the work of all our Party organisations, we shall cope with the second great task before us.

We have learned how to overthrow the bourgeoisie, how to suppress them, and we are proud of the fact. But we have not yet learned how to regulate our relations with the millions of middle peasants, how to win their confidence, and we must frankly admit it. But we have understood the task, we have set it, and we say in all confidence, with full knowledge and determination, that we shall cope with this task—and then socialism will be absolutely invincible. (*Prolonged applause.*)

## RESOLUTION ON THE ATTITUDE TO THE MIDDLE PEASANTS

Basing itself on the Party Programme adopted on March 22, 1919, insofar as it concerns work in the rural areas, and giving full support to the law already promulgated by the Soviet government on socialist land settlement and the measures for the transition to socialist farming, the Eighth Congress recognises that at the present time it is particularly important to adhere more strictly to the line of the Party in respect of the middle peasants, to display a more considerate attitude towards their needs, end arbitrary action on the part of the local authorities, and make an effort towards agreement with them.

1) To confuse the middle peasants with the kulaks and to extend to them in one or another degree measures directed against the kulaks is to violate most flagrantly not only all the decrees of the Soviet government and its entire policy, but also all the basic principles of communism, according to which agreement between the proletariat and the middle peasants is one of the conditions for a painless transition to the abolition of all exploitation in the period of decisive struggle waged by the proletariat to overthrow the bourgeoisie.

2) The middle peasants, who have comparatively strong economic roots owing to the lagging of agricultural techniques behind industrial techniques even in the leading capitalist countries, to say nothing of Russia, will continue to exist for quite a long time after the beginning of the proletarian revolution. Therefore, the tactics of the functionaries of the Soviets in the villages, as well as of Party functionaries, must envisage a long period of co-operation with the middle peasants.

3) The Party must at all costs ensure that all Soviet functionaries in the countryside have a clear and thorough grasp of the axiom of scientific socialism that the middle peasants are not exploiters since they do not profit by the labour of others. Such a class of small producers cannot lose by socialism, but, on the contrary, will gain a great deal by casting off the yoke of capital which exploits it in a thousand different ways even in a most democratic republic.

The correctly applied policy of Soviet power in the countryside, therefore, ensures alliance and agreement between the victorious proletariat and the middle peasants.

4) While encouraging co-operatives of all kinds as well as agricultural communes of middle peasants, representatives of Soviet power must not allow the slightest coercion to be used in setting them up. Associations are only worth while when they have been set up by the peasants themselves, on their own initiative, and the benefits of them have been verified in practice. Undue haste in this matter is harmful, for it can only strengthen prejudices against innovations among the middle peasants.

Representatives of Soviet power who permit themselves to employ not only direct but even indirect compulsion to bring peasants into communes must be brought strictly to account and removed from work in the countryside.

5) All arbitrary requisitioning, i.e., requisitioning not in conformity with the exact provisions of laws issued by the central authority, must be ruthlessly punished. The Congress insists on the strengthening of control in this field by the People's Commissariat of Agriculture, People's Commissariat of the Interior, and the All-Russia Central Executive Committee.

6) At the present time the extreme chaos which has been caused in all countries of the world by the four years of imperialist war in the predatory interests of the capitalists, and which has become particularly acute in Russia, places the middle peasants in a difficult position.

In view of this, the law issued by the Soviet government on the emergency tax, as distinct from all the laws issued by all the bourgeois governments in the world, makes a point of laying the burden of the tax wholly on the kulaks, the inconsiderable number of peasant exploiters who particularly enriched themselves during the war. The middle peasants must be taxed very mildly, so that the sum levied is fully within their means and not burdensome to them.

The Party demands, in any case, lenience towards the middle peasants in collecting the emergency tax, even if this reduces the total revenue.

7) The socialist state must extend the widest possible aid to the peasants, mainly by supplying the middle peasants with products of urban industries and, especially, improved agricultural implements, seed and various materials in order to raise efficiency in agriculture and ensure improvement of the peasants' working and living conditions.

If the present economic chaos does not allow the immediate and full implementation of these measures, it remains the duty of local Soviet authorities to explore all possible avenues to render the poor and middle peasants any real aid to support them at the present difficult moment. The Party finds it necessary to establish a large state fund for this purpose.

8) In particular, efforts must be made to give real and full effect to the law issued by the Soviet government which requires of state farms, agricultural communes, and all other similar associations that they render immediate and all-round assistance to the middle peasants in their neighbourhood. Only on the basis of such actual assistance is it possible to achieve agreement with the middle peasants. Only in this way can and must their confidence be won.

The Congress draws the attention of all Party workers to the need to put into effect immediately all the points set forth in the agrarian section of the Party Programme, namely:

(a) regulation of the use of land by the peasants (elimination of scattered holdings, the open field system, etc.), (b) supply of improved seeds and artificial fertilisers to the peasants, (c) improvement of the breeds of the peasants' livestock, (d) spreading of agronomical knowledge, (e) agronomical assistance to the peasants, (f) repair of the peasants' farm implements at repair shops belonging to the Soviets, (g) organisation of centres hiring out implements, experimental stations, model fields, etc., (h) improvements to the peasants' land.

9) Peasants' co-operative associations with the object of increasing agricultural production, and especially of processing farm produce, improvements to the peasants' land, support of handicraft industries, etc., must be accorded extensive aid, both financial and organisational, by the state.

10) The Congress reminds all concerned that neither the decisions of the Party nor the decrees of Soviet power have ever deviated from the line of agreement with the middle peasants. In the cardinal matter of the organisation of Soviet power in the countryside, for instance, a circular letter signed by the Chairman of the Council of People's Commissars and the People's Commissar for Food was issued when the Poor Peasants' Committees were established, pointing to the need to include in these Committees representatives of the middle peasants.\* When the Poor Peasants' Committees were abolished, the All-Russia Congress of Soviets again pointed to the need to include representatives of the middle peasants in the volost Soviets. The policy of the workers' and peasants' government and the Communist Party must in the future too be permeated by this spirit of agreement between the proletariat and the poor peasants on the one hand, and the middle peasants on the other.

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# **THESES OF THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE OF THE RUSSIAN COMMUNIST PARTY (BOLSHEVIKS) ON THE SITUATION ON THE EASTERN FRONT**

Kolchak's victories on the Eastern Front are creating an extremely grave danger for the Soviet Republic. Our efforts must be exerted to the utmost to smash Kolchak.

The Central Committee therefore instructs all Party organisations to concentrate their efforts first and foremost on the following measures, which must be carried out by the Party organisations and, in particular, by the trade unions in order to enlist wider sections of the working class in the active defence of the country.

1. Support in every way the mobilisation ordered on April 11, 1919.

All the forces of the Party and the trade unions must be mobilised immediately so as to render, within the next few days, without the slightest delay, the most energetic assistance to the mobilisation decreed by the Council of People's Commissars on April 10, 1919.

The mobilised men must at once be made to see the active participation of the trade unions and to feel that they have the support of the working class.

In particular, it must be made clear to every mobilised man that his immediate departure for the front will mean an improvement in his food situation; firstly, because of the better ration received by the soldiers in the grain-producing front-line zone; secondly, because of the fact that the food brought into the hungry gubernias will be distributed among fewer people; thirdly, because of the widely organised dispatch of food parcels by Red Army men in the front areas to their families at home.

The Central Committee demands of every Party and trade union organisation a weekly report, however brief, on what has been done to help mobilisation and the mobilised.

2. In the areas near the front, especially in the Volgaside region, trade union members must be armed to a man, and in the event of a shortage of arms, they must all be mobilised to render every possible aid to the Red Army, to replace casualties, etc.

Such towns as Pokrovsk, where the trade unions themselves decided to mobilise immediately 50 per cent of their members, should serve us as an example. The metropolitan cities and the large industrial centres must not lag behind Pokrovsk.

The trade unions everywhere must, using their own forces and means, carry out a check registration of their members in order that all who are not absolutely indispensable at home may be sent to fight for the Volga and the Ural territory.

3. The most serious attention must be given to intensifying agitational work, especially among those to be mobilised, those already mobilised and Red Army men. The usual methods of agitation—lectures, meetings, etc.—are not enough; agitation should be carried on among Red Army men by workers, singly or in groups; such groups of ordinary workers, members of trade unions, should be appointed specifically to barracks, Red Army units and factories. The trade unions must institute a check to see that every one of their members takes part in house-to-house agitation, distribution of leaflets and personal talks.

4. All male office workers are to be replaced by women, for which purpose a new registration, both Party and trade union, shall be carried out.

Special cards shall be introduced for all trade union members and all office workers, indicating the part they are personally taking in assisting the Red Army.

5. *Aid Bureaus or Committees of Action*, local and central, are to be instituted immediately through the trade unions, factory committees, Party organisations, co-operative societies, etc. Their addresses shall be published. The public shall be informed of them in the widest possible manner. Every man liable to mobilisation, every Red Army man, and every person desirous of leaving for the South, for the Don or the Ukraine for food supply work should know that there is an aid bureau or a committee of action nearby; that it is accessible to every worker and peasant and he can obtain advice or instruction there, that contact with the army authorities will be facilitated for him, etc.

It shall be the special task of these bureaus to help to equip the Red Army. We can greatly increase the strength of our army if we improve the supply of arms, clothing, etc. And among the population there are still considerable quantities of arms which have been hidden or are not being used for the army. There are still considerable factory stocks of goods of various kinds needed by the army, and they must be quickly found and dispatched to

the army. The army organisations in charge of supplies should be given immediate, broad and effective assistance by the general public. Every effort must be devoted to this matter.

6. The trade unions must organise the extensive enlistment of peasants, especially of peasant youths in the non-agricultural gubernias, for the ranks of the Red Army, for the formation of food detachments and for the food army in the Don and the Ukraine.

This activity can and should be expanded to many times its present volume; it helps both to assist the hungry population of the metropolitan cities and the non-agricultural gubernias and to strengthen the Red Army.

7. As regards the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries, the Party line in the present situation is to imprison those who assist Kolchak, whether deliberately or unwittingly. In our republic of working people we shall not tolerate anybody who does not help us by deeds in the fight against Kolchak. Among the Mensheviks and the Socialist-Revolutionaries there are people who are willing to render such help. These people should be encouraged and given practical jobs, principally in the way of technical assistance to the Red Army in the rear, and their work must be strictly supervised.

The Central Committee appeals to all Party organisations and all trade unions to set to work in a revolutionary way, and not confine themselves to the old stereotyped methods.

We can defeat Kolchak. We can gain an early and final victory, because our victories in the South and the international situation, which is daily improving and changing in our favour, guarantee our ultimate triumph.

We must exert every effort, display revolutionary energy, and Kolchak will be rapidly defeated. The Volga, the Urals and Siberia can and must be defended and regained.

*Central Committee of the Russian  
Communist Party (Bolsheviks)*

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## GREETINGS TO THE HUNGARIAN WORKERS

Comrades, the news we have been receiving from the Hungarian Soviet leaders fills us with enthusiasm and pleasure. Soviet government has been in existence in Hungary for only a little over two months, yet as regards organisation the Hungarian proletariat already seems to have excelled us. That is understandable, for in Hungary the general cultural level of the population is higher; furthermore, the proportion of industrial workers to the total population is immeasurably greater (in Budapest there are three million of the eight million population of present-day Hungary), and, lastly, in Hungary the transition to the Soviet system, to the dictatorship of the proletariat, has been incomparably easier and more peaceful.

This last circumstance is particularly important. The majority of the European socialist leaders, of both the social-chauvinist and Kautskyite trends, have become so much a prey to purely philistine prejudices, fostered by decades of relatively "peaceful" capitalism and the bourgeois-parliamentary system, that they are unable to understand what Soviet power and the dictatorship of the proletariat mean. The proletariat cannot perform its epoch-making liberating mission unless it removes these leaders from its path, unless it sweeps them out of its way. These people believed, or half-believed, the bourgeois lies about Soviet power in Russia and were unable to distinguish the nature of the new, proletarian democracy—democracy for the working people, socialist democracy, as embodied in Soviet government—from bourgeois democracy, which they slavishly worship and call "pure democracy" or "democracy" in general.

These blind people, fettered by bourgeois prejudices, failed to understand the epoch-making change from bourgeois to proletarian democracy, from bourgeois to proletarian dictatorship. They confused certain specific features of Russian Soviet govern-

ment, of the history of its development in Russia, with Soviet government as an international phenomenon.

The Hungarian proletarian revolution is helping even the blind to see. The form of transition to the dictatorship of the proletariat in Hungary is altogether different from that in Russia—voluntary resignation of the bourgeois government, instantaneous restoration of working-class unity, socialist unity *on a communist programme*. The nature of Soviet power is now all the clearer; the only form of rule which has the support of the working people and of the proletariat at their head that is now possible anywhere in the world is Soviet rule, the dictatorship of the proletariat.

This dictatorship presupposes the ruthlessly severe, swift and resolute use of force to crush the resistance of the exploiters, the capitalists, landowners and their underlings. Whoever does not understand this is not a revolutionary, and must be removed from the post of leader or adviser of the proletariat.

But the essence of proletarian dictatorship is not in force alone, or even mainly in force. Its chief feature is the organisation and discipline of the advanced contingent of the working people, of their vanguard; of their sole leader, the proletariat, whose object is to build socialism, abolish the division of society into classes, make all members of society working people, and remove the basis for all exploitation of man by man. This object cannot be achieved at one stroke. It requires a fairly long period of transition from capitalism to socialism, because the reorganisation of production is a difficult matter, because radical changes in all spheres of life need time, and because the enormous force of habit of running things in a petty-bourgeois and bourgeois way can only be overcome by a long and stubborn struggle. That is why Marx spoke of an entire period of the dictatorship of the proletariat as the period of transition from capitalism to socialism.<sup>88</sup>

Throughout the whole of this transition period, resistance to the revolution will be offered both by the capitalists and by their numerous myrmidons among the bourgeois intellectuals, who will resist consciously, and by the vast mass of the working people, including the peasants, who are shackled very much by petty-bourgeois habits and traditions, and who all too often will resist unconsciously. Vacillations among these groups are inevitable. As a working man the peasant gravitates towards socialism, and prefers the dictatorship of the workers to the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie. As a seller of grain, the peasant gravitates towards the bourgeoisie, towards freedom of trade, i.e., back to the "habitual", old, "time-hallowed" capitalism.

What is needed to enable the proletariat to lead the peasants and the petty-bourgeois groups in general is the dictatorship

of the proletariat, the rule of one class, its strength of organisation and discipline, its centralised power based on all the achievements of the culture, science and technology of capitalism, its proletarian affinity to the mentality of every working man, its prestige with the disunited, less developed working people in the countryside or in petty industry, who are less firm in politics. Here phrase-mongering about "democracy" in general, about "unity" or the "unity of labour democracy", about the "equality" of all "men of labour", and so on and so forth—the phrase-mongering for which the now petty-bourgeois social-chauvinists and Kautskyites have such a predilection—is of no use whatever. Phrase-mongering only throws dust in the eyes, blinds the mind and strengthens the old stupidity, conservatism, and routine of capitalism, the parliamentary system and bourgeois democracy.

The abolition of classes requires a long, difficult and stubborn *class struggle*, which, *after* the overthrow of capitalist rule, *after* the destruction of the bourgeois state, *after* the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat, *does not disappear* (as the vulgar representatives of the old socialism and the old Social-Democracy imagine), but merely changes its forms and in many respects becomes fiercer.

The proletariat, by means of a class struggle against the resistance of the bourgeoisie, against the conservatism, routine, irresolution and vacillation of the petty bourgeoisie, must uphold its power, strengthen its organising influence, "neutralise" those groups which fear to leave the bourgeoisie and which follow the proletariat too hesitantly, and consolidate the new discipline, the comradely discipline of the working people, their firm bond with the proletariat, their unity with the proletariat—that new discipline, that new basis of social ties in place of the serf discipline of the Middle Ages and the discipline of starvation, the discipline of "free" wage-slavery under capitalism.

In order to abolish classes a period of the dictatorship of one class is needed, the dictatorship of precisely that oppressed class which is capable not only of overthrowing the exploiters, not only of ruthlessly crushing their resistance, but also of breaking ideologically with the entire bourgeois-democratic outlook, with all the philistine phrase-mongering about liberty and equality in general (in reality, this phrase-mongering implies, as Marx demonstrated long ago, the "liberty and equality" of *commodity owners*, the "liberty and equality" of *the capitalist and the worker*).

More, classes can be abolished only by the dictatorship of that oppressed class which has been schooled, united, trained and steelled by decades of the strike and political struggle against capital—of that class alone which has assimilated all the urban,

industrial, big-capitalist culture and has the determination and ability to protect it and to preserve and further develop all its achievements, and make them available to all the people, to all the working people—of that class alone which will be able to bear all the hardships, trials, privations and great sacrifices which history inevitably imposes upon those who break with the past and boldly have a road for themselves to a new future—of that class alone whose finest members are full of hatred and contempt for everything petty-bourgeois and philistine, for the qualities that flourish so profusely among the petty bourgeoisie, the minor employees and the “intellectuals”—of that class alone which “has been through the hardening school of labour” and is able to inspire respect for its efficiency in every working person and every honest man.

Hungarian workers! Comrades! You have set the world an even better example than Soviet Russia by your ability to unite all socialists at one stroke on the platform of genuine proletarian dictatorship. You are now faced with the most gratifying and most difficult task of holding your own in a rigorous war against the Entente. Be firm. Should vacillation manifest itself among the socialists who yesterday gave their support to you, to the dictatorship of the proletariat, or among the petty bourgeoisie, suppress it ruthlessly. In war the coward's legitimate fate is the bullet.

You are waging the only legitimate, just and truly revolutionary war, a war of the oppressed against the oppressors, a war of the working people against the exploiters, a war for the victory of socialism. All honest members of the working class all over the world are on your side. Every month brings the world proletarian revolution nearer.

Be firm! Victory will be yours!

May 27, 1919

*Lenin*

*Pravda* No. 115,  
May 29, 1919

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## A GREAT BEGINNING

HEROISM OF THE WORKERS IN THE REAR.  
"COMMUNIST SUBBOTNIKS"

The press reports many instances of the heroism of the Red Army men. In the fight against Kolchak, Denikin and other forces of the landowners and capitalists, the workers and peasants very often display miracles of bravery and endurance, defending the gains of the socialist revolution. The guerrilla spirit, weariness and indiscipline are being overcome; it is a slow and difficult process, but it is making headway in spite of everything. The heroism of the working people making voluntary sacrifices for the victory of socialism—this is the foundation of the new, comradely discipline in the Red Army, the foundation on which that army is regenerating, gaining strength and growing.

The heroism of the workers in the rear is no less worthy of attention. In this connection, the *communist subbotniks* organised by the workers on their own initiative are really of enormous significance. Evidently, this is only a beginning, but it is a beginning of exceptionally great importance. It is the beginning of a revolution that is more difficult, more tangible, more radical and more decisive than the overthrow of the bourgeoisie, for it is a victory over our own conservatism, indiscipline, petty-bourgeois egoism, a victory over the habits left as a heritage to the worker and peasant by accursed capitalism. Only when *this* victory is consolidated will the new social discipline, socialist discipline, be created; then and only then will a reversion to capitalism become impossible, will communism become really invincible.

*Pravda* in its issue of May 17 published an article by A. J. entitled: "Work in a Revolutionary Way. A Communist Saturday". This article is so important that we reproduce it here in full.

### "WORK IN A REVOLUTIONARY WAY "A COMMUNIST SATURDAY"

"The letter of the Russian Communist Party's Central Committee on working in a *revolutionary way* was a powerful stimulus to communist organisations and to Communists. The general wave of enthusiasm carried many

communist railway workers to the front, but the majority of them could not leave their responsible posts or find new forms of working in a revolutionary way. Reports from the localities about the tardiness with which the work of mobilisation was proceeding and the prevalence of red tape compelled the Moscow-Kazan Railway district to turn its attention to the way the railway was functioning. It turned out that, owing to the shortage of labour and low productivity of labour, urgent orders and repairs to locomotives were being held up. At a general meeting of Communists and sympathisers of the Moscow-Kazan Railway district held on May 7, the question was raised of passing from words to deeds in helping to achieve victory over Kolchak. The following resolution was moved:

"In view of the grave domestic and foreign situation, Communists and sympathisers, in order to gain the upper hand over the class enemy, must spur themselves on again and deduct an extra hour from their rest, i.e., lengthen their working day by one hour, accumulate these extra hours and put in six extra hours of manual labour on Saturday for the purpose of creating real values of immediate worth. Since Communists must not grudge their health and life for the gains of the revolution, this work should be performed without pay. *Communist Saturdays* are to be introduced throughout the district and to continue until complete victory over Kolchak has been achieved."

"After some hesitation, the resolution was adopted unanimously."

"On Saturday, May 10, at 6 p.m., the Communists and sympathisers turned up to work like soldiers, formed ranks, and without fuss or bustle were taken by the foremen to the various jobs."

"The results of working in a revolutionary way are evident. The accompanying table gives the places of work and the character of the work performed. (See table on the next page.)"

"The total value of the work performed at ordinary rates of pay is five million rubles; calculated at overtime rates it would be fifty per cent higher."

"The productivity of labour in loading waggons was 270 per cent higher than that of regular workers. The productivity of labour on other jobs was approximately the same."

"Jobs (urgent) were done which had been held up for periods ranging from seven days to three months owing to the shortage of labour and to red tape."

"The work was done in spite of the state of disrepair (easily remedied) of implements, as a result of which certain groups were held up from thirty to forty minutes."

"The administration left in charge of the work could hardly keep pace with the men in finding new jobs for them, and perhaps it was only a slight exaggeration when an old foreman said that as much work was done at this *communist Saturday* as would have been done in a week by non-class-conscious and slack workers."

"In view of the fact that many non-Communists, sincere supporters of the Soviet government, took part in the work, and that many more are expected on future Saturdays, and also in view of the fact that many other districts desire to follow the example of the communist railway workers of the Moscow-Kazan Railway, I shall deal in greater detail with the organisational side of the matter as seen from reports received from the localities."

"Of those taking part in the work, some ten per cent were Communists permanently employed in the localities. The rest were persons occupying responsible and elective posts, from the commissar of the railway to commissars of individual enterprises, representatives of the trade union, and employees of the head office and of the Commissariat of Railways."

"The enthusiasm and team spirit displayed during work were extraordinary. When the workers, clerks and head office employees, without even an

Place of work	Character of work	Number employed	Hours worked		Work performed
			per person	Total	
Moscow Main locomotive shops	Loading materials for the line, devices for repairing locomotives and carriage parts for Perovo Murom, Alaty and Syzran	48	5	240	Loaded 7 500 poods Unloaded 1 500 poods
		21	3	63	
		5	4	20	
Moscow Passenger depot	Complex current repairs to locomotives	26	5	130	Repairs done on 12 locomotive
Moscow Shunting yards	Current repairs to locomotive	24	6	144	2 locomotive completed and parts to be repaired dismantled on 1
Moscow Carriage department	Current repairs to passenger carriages	12	6	72	third class carriage
Perovo Main carriage work shops	Carriage repairs and minor repairs on Saturday and Sunday	46	5	230	1 box carriage and two flat carriage
		23	5	115	
	<i>Total</i>	205		1 012	1 locomotive and 16 carriage turned out and 3 500 poods unloaded and loaded

oath or argument caught hold of the forty pood wheel tire of a passenger locomotive and like industrious ants rolled it into place one's heart was filled with fervent joy at the sight of this collective effort and one's conviction was strengthened that the victory of the working class was unshakable. The international bandits will not crush the victorious workers the internal saboteurs will not live to see Kolchak.

(Озброєне парове в'язи  
по в'язи, по в'язи, по в'язи  
в'язи, в'язи, в'язи)

Но исключая всепланетного расчужения, горюх  
рабочих В. Шмю. Прямое-таки изгнание, как  
на в своем оформлении и иной устройстве рас-  
тают, но их содержанию материю, качеством.  
таких субъектов. Видимо, это дело уже  
качал, то в то качал качеством делом  
важно. Это-качал качеством, содержанием.  
делом содержанием, качеством, делом  
качеством, делом качеством, делом





"When the work was finished those present witnessed an unprecedented scene: a hundred Communists, weary, but with the light of joy in their eyes, greeted their success with the solemn strains of the *Internationale*. And it seemed as if the triumphant strains of the triumphant anthem would sweep over the walls through the whole of working-class Moscow and that like the waves caused by a stone thrown into a pool they would spread through the whole of working-class Russia and shake up the weary and the slack.

"A. J."

Appraising this remarkable "example worthy of emulation", Comrade N. R. in an article in *Pravda* of May 20, under that heading, wrote:

"Cases of Communists working like this are not rare. I know of similar cases at an electric power station, and on various railways. On the Nikolayevskaya Railway, the Communists worked overtime several nights to lift a locomotive that had fallen into the turn-table pit. In the winter, all the Communists and sympathisers on the Northern Railway worked several Sundays clearing the track of snow; and the communist cells at many goods stations patrol the stations at night to prevent stealing. But all this work was casual and unsystematic. The comrades on the Moscow-Kazan line are making this work systematic and permanent, and this is new. They say in their resolution, 'until complete victory over Kolchak has been achieved', and therein lies the significance of their work. They are lengthening the working day of every Communist and sympathiser by one hour for the duration of the state of war; simultaneously, their productivity of labour is exemplary.

"This example has called forth, and is bound to call forth, further emulation. A general meeting of the Communists and sympathisers on the Alexandrovskaya Railway, after discussing the military situation and the resolution adopted by the comrades on the Moscow-Kazan Railway, resolved: (1) to introduce 'subbotniks' for the Communists and sympathisers on the Alexandrovskaya Railway, the first subbotnik to take place on May 17; (2) to organise the Communists and sympathisers in exemplary, model teams which must show the workers how to work and what can really be done with the present materials and tools, and in the present food situation.

"The Moscow-Kazan comrades say that their example has made a great impression and that they expect a large number of *non-Party* workers to turn up next Saturday. At the time these lines are being written, the Communists have not yet started working overtime in the Alexandrovskaya Railway workshops, but as soon as the rumour spread that they were to do so the mass of non-Party workers stirred themselves. 'We did not know yesterday, otherwise we would have worked as well!' 'I will certainly come next Saturday,' can be heard on all sides. The impression created by work of this sort is very great.

"The example set by the Moscow-Kazan comrades should be emulated by all the communist cells in the rear; not only the communist cells at Moscow Junction, but the whole Party organisation in Russia. In the rural districts too, the communist cells should in the first place set to work to till the fields of Red Army men and thus help their families.

"The comrades on the Moscow-Kazan line finished their first communist subbotnik by singing the *Internationale*. If the communist organisations throughout Russia follow this example and consistently apply it, the Russian Soviet Republic will successfully weather the coming severe months to the mighty strains of the *Internationale* sung by all the working people of the Republic....

"To work, communist comrades!"

On May 23, 1919, *Pravda* reported the following:

**"The first communist 'subbotnik' on the Alexandrovskaya Railway took place on May 17. In accordance with the resolution adopted by their general meeting, ninety-eight Communists and sympathisers worked five hours overtime without pay, receiving in return only the right to purchase a second dinner, and, as manual labourers, half a pound of bread to go with their dinner."**

Although the work was poorly prepared and organised the *productivity of labour was nevertheless from two to three times higher than usual.*

Here are a few examples.

Five turners turned eighty spindle<sup>s</sup> in four hours. The productivity is 213 per cent of the usual level.

Twenty unskilled workers in four hours collected scrap materials of a total weight of 600 poods, and seventy laminated carriage springs, each weighing  $3\frac{1}{2}$  poods, making a total of 850 poods. Productivity, 300 per cent of the usual level.

"The comrades explain this by the fact that ordinarily their work is boring and tiresome, whereas here they worked with a will and with enthusiasm. Now, however, they will be ashamed to turn out less in regular working hours than they did at the communist subbotnik.

"Now many non-Party workers say that they would like to take part in the subbotniks. The locomotive crews volunteer to take locomotives from the 'cemetery', during a subbotnik, repair them and set them going.

"It is reported that similar subbotniks are to be organised on the Vyazma line."

How the work is done at these communist subbotniks is described by Comrade A. Dyachenko in an article in *Pravda* of June 7, entitled "Notes of a Subbotnik Worker". We quote the main passages from this article.

"A comrade and I were very pleased to go and do our 'bit' in the subbotnik arranged by a decision of the railway district committee of the Party; for a time, for a few hours, I would give my head a rest and my muscles a bit of exercise. . . . We were detailed off to the railway carpentry shop. We got there, found a number of our people, exchanged greetings, engaged in banter for a bit, counted up our forces and found that there were thirty of us. . . . And in front of us lay a 'monster', a steam boiler weighing no less than six or seven hundred poods; our job was to 'shift' it, i.e., move it over a distance of a quarter or a third of a verst, to its base. We began to have our doubts. . . . However, we started on the job. Some comrades placed wooden rollers under the boiler, attached two ropes to it, and we began to tug away. . . . The boiler gave way reluctantly, but at length it budged. We were delighted. After all, there were so few of us. . . . For nearly two weeks this boiler had resisted the efforts of thrice our number of non-communist workers and nothing could make it budge until we tackled it. . . . We worked for an hour, strenuously, rhythmically, to the command of our 'foreman'—'one, two, three', and the boiler kept on rolling. Suddenly there was confusion, and a number of our comrades went tumbling on to the ground in the funniest fashion. The rope 'let them down'. . . . A moment's delay, and a thicker rope was made fast. . . . Evening. It was getting dark, but we had yet to ne-

gotiate a small hillock, and then our job would soon be done. Our arms ached, our palms burned, we were hot and pulled for all we were worth—and were making headway. The 'management' stood round and somewhat shamed by our success, clutched at a rope. 'Lend a hand, it's time you did!' A Red Army man was watching our labours; in his hands he held an accordion. What was he thinking? Who were these people? Why should they work on Saturday when everybody was at home? I solved his riddle and said to him: 'Comrade, play us a jolly tune. We are not raw hands, we are real Communists. Don't you see how fast the work is going under our hands? We are not lazy, we are pulling for all we are worth!' In response, the Red Army man carefully put his accordion on the ground and hastened to grab at a rope end. . . .

"Suddenly Comrade U. struck up the workers' song 'Dubinushka', '*anglichanin mudrets*', he sang, in an excellent tenor voice, and we all joined in the refrain of this labour shanty: '*Eh, dubinushku, ukhnem, podyornem, podyornem. . .*'

"We were unaccustomed to the work, our muscles were weary, our shoulders, our backs ached . . . but the next day would be a free day, our day of rest, and we would be able to get all the sleep we wanted. The goal was near, and after a little hesitation our 'monster' rolled almost right up to the base. 'Put some boards under, raise it on the base, and let the boiler do the work that has long been expected of it.' We went off in a crowd to the 'club room' of the local Party cell. The room was brightly lit; the walls decorated with posters; rifles stacked around the room. After lustily singing the *Internationale* we enjoyed a glass of tea and 'rum', and even bread. This treat, given us by the local comrades, was very welcome after our arduous toil. We took a brotherly farewell of our comrades and lined up. The strains of revolutionary songs echoed through the slumbering streets in the silence of the night and our measured tread kept time with the music. We sang 'Comrades, the Bugles Are Sounding', 'Arise Ye Starvelings from Your Slumbers', songs of the International and of labour

"A week passed. Our arms and shoulders were back to normal and we were going to another 'subbotnik', nine versts away this time, to repair railway waggons. Our destination was Perovo. The comrades climbed on the roof of an 'American' box waggon and sang the *Internationale* well and with gusto. The people on the train listened to the singing, evidently in surprise. The wheels knocked a measured beat, and those of us who failed to get on to the roof clung to the steps, pretending to be 'devil-may-care' passengers. The train pulled in. We had reached our destination. We passed through a long yard and were warmly greeted by the commissar, Comrade G.

"There is plenty of work, but few to do it! Only thirty of us, and in six hours we have to do average repairs to a baker's dozen of waggons! Here are twin-wheels already marked. We have not only empty waggons, but also a filled cistern. . . . But that's nothing, we'll "make a job of it", comrades!

"Work went with a swing. Five comrades and I were working with hoists. Under pressure of our shoulders and two hoists, and directed by our 'foreman', these twin-wheels, weighing from sixty to seventy poods apiece, skipped from one track to another in the liveliest possible manner. One pair disappeared, another rolled into place. At last all were in their assigned places, and swiftly we shifted the old worn-out junk into a shed. . . . One, two, three—and, raised by a revolving iron hoist, they were dislodged from the rails in a trice. Over there, in the dark, we heard the rapid strokes of hammers; the comrades, like worker bees, were busy on their 'sick' cars. Some were carpentering, others painting, still others were covering roofs, to the joy of the comrade commissar and our own. The smiths also asked for our aid. In a portable smithy a rod with a coupling hook was gleaming white-hot; it had been bent by careless shunting. It was laid on the anvil, scattering

white sparks, and, under the experienced direction of the smith, our trusty hammers beat it back into its proper shape. Still red-hot and spitting sparks, we rushed it on our shoulders to where it had to go. We pushed it into its socket. A few hammer strokes and it was fixed. We crawled under the waggon. The coupling system is not as simple as it looks; there are all sorts of contraptions with rivets and springs. . . .

"Work was in full swing. Night was falling. The torches seemed to burn brighter than before. Soon it would be time to knock off. Some of the comrades were taking a 'rest' against some trees and 'sipping' hot tea. The May night was cool, and the new moon shone beautifully like a gleaming sickle in the sky. People were laughing and joking.

"'Knock off, Comrade G., thirteen waggons are enough!'

"But Comrade G. was not satisfied

"We finished our tea, broke into our songs of triumph, and marched to the door . . ."

The movement of "communist subbotniks" is not confined to Moscow. *Pravda* of June 6 reported the following:

"The first communist subbotnik in Tver took place on May 31. One hundred and twenty-eight Communists worked on the railway. In three and a half hours they loaded and unloaded fourteen waggons, repaired three locomotives, cut up ten sagens of firewood and performed other work. The productivity of labour of the skilled communist workers was thirteen times above normal."

Again, on June 8 we read in *Pravda*:

"Communist Subbotniks

"*Saratov*, June 5 In response to the appeal of their Moscow comrades, the communist railway workers here at general Party meeting resolved: to work five hours overtime on Saturdays without pay in order to support the national economy."

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I have given the fullest and most detailed information about the communist subbotniks because in this we undoubtedly observe one of the most important aspects of communist construction, to which our press pays insufficient attention, and which all of us have as yet failed properly to appreciate.

Less political fireworks and more attention to the simplest but living facts of communist construction, taken from and tested by actual life—this is the slogan which all of us, our writers, agitators, propagandists, organisers, etc., should repeat unceasingly.

It was natural and inevitable in the first period after the proletarian revolution that we should be engaged primarily on the main and fundamental task of overcoming the resistance of the bourgeoisie, of vanquishing the exploiters, of crushing their conspiracy (like the "slave-owners' conspiracy" to surrender Petrograd, in which all from the Black Hundreds and Cadets to the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries were involved<sup>89</sup>). But simultaneously with this task, another task comes

to the forefront just as inevitably and ever more imperatively as time goes on, namely, the more important task of positive communist construction, the creation of new economic relations, of a new society.

As I have had occasion to point out more than once, among other occasions in the speech I delivered at a session of the Petrograd Soviet on March 12, the dictatorship of the proletariat is not only the use of force against the exploiters, and not even mainly the use of force. The economic foundation of this use of revolutionary force, the guarantee of its effectiveness and success is the fact that the proletariat represents and creates a higher type of social organisation of labour compared with capitalism. This is what is important, this is the source of the strength and the guarantee that the final triumph of communism is inevitable.

The feudal organisation of social labour rested on the discipline of the bludgeon, while the working people, robbed and tyrannised by a handful of landowners, were utterly ignorant and downtrodden. The capitalist organisation of social labour rested on the discipline of hunger, and, notwithstanding all the progress of bourgeois culture and bourgeois democracy, the vast mass of the working people in the most advanced, civilised and democratic republics remained an ignorant and downtrodden mass of wage-slaves or oppressed peasants, robbed and tyrannised by a handful of capitalists. The communist organisation of social labour, the first step towards which is socialism, rests, and will do so more and more as time goes on, on the free and conscious discipline of the working people themselves who have thrown off the yoke both of the landowners and capitalists.

This new discipline does not drop from the skies, nor is it born from pious wishes; it grows out of the material conditions of large-scale capitalist production, and out of them alone. Without them it is impossible. And the repository, or the vehicle, of these material conditions is a definite historical class, created, organised, united, trained, educated and hardened by large-scale capitalism. This class is the proletariat.

If we translate the Latin, scientific, historico-philosophical term "dictatorship of the proletariat" into simpler language, it means just the following:

Only a definite class, namely, the urban workers and the factory, industrial workers in general, is able to lead the whole mass of the working and exploited people in the struggle to throw off the yoke of capital, in actually carrying it out, in the struggle to maintain and consolidate the victory, in the work of creating the new, socialist social system and in the entire struggle for the complete abolition of classes. (Let us observe in parenthesis that the only scientific distinction between socialism and communism

is that the first term implies the first stage of the new society arising out of capitalism, while the second implies the next and higher stage.)

The mistake the "Berne" yellow International makes is that its leaders accept the class struggle and the leading role of the proletariat only in word and are afraid to think it out to its logical conclusion. They are afraid of that inevitable conclusion which particularly terrifies the bourgeoisie, and which is absolutely unacceptable to them. They are afraid to admit that the dictatorship of the proletariat is *also* a period of class struggle, which is inevitable as long as classes have not been abolished, and which changes in form, being particularly fierce and particularly peculiar in the period immediately following the overthrow of capital. The proletariat does not cease the class struggle after it has captured political power, but continues it until classes are abolished—of course, under different circumstances, in different form and by different means.

And what does the "abolition of classes" mean? All those who call themselves socialists recognise this as the ultimate goal of socialism, but by no means all give thought to its significance. Classes are large groups of people differing from each other by the place they occupy in a historically determined system of social production, by their relation (in most cases fixed and formulated in law) to the means of production, by their role in the social organisation of labour, and, consequently, by the dimensions of the share of social wealth of which they dispose and the mode of acquiring it. Classes are groups of people one of which can appropriate the labour of another owing to the different places they occupy in a definite system of social economy.

Clearly, in order to abolish classes completely, it is not enough to overthrow the exploiters, the landowners and capitalists, not enough to abolish *their* rights of ownership; it is necessary also to abolish *all* private ownership of the means of production, it is necessary to abolish the distinction between town and country, as well as the distinction between manual workers and brain workers. This requires a very long period of time. In order to achieve this an enormous step forward must be taken in developing the productive forces; it is necessary to overcome the resistance (frequently passive, which is particularly stubborn and particularly difficult to overcome) of the numerous survivals of small-scale production; it is necessary to overcome the enormous force of habit and conservatism which are connected with these survivals.

The assumption that all "working people" are equally capable of doing this work would be an empty phrase, or the illusion of an antediluvian, pre-Marxist socialist; for this ability does

not come of itself, but grows historically, and grows *only* out of the material conditions of large-scale capitalist production. This ability, at the beginning of the road from capitalism to socialism, is possessed by the proletariat *alone*. It is capable of fulfilling the gigantic task that confronts it, first, because it is the strongest and most advanced class in civilised societies; secondly, because in the most developed countries it constitutes the majority of the population, and thirdly, because in backward capitalist countries, like Russia, the majority of the population consists of semi-proletarians, i.e., of people who regularly live in a proletarian way part of the year, who regularly earn a part of their means of subsistence as wage-workers in capitalist enterprises.

Those who try to solve the problems involved in the transition from capitalism to socialism on the basis of general talk about liberty, equality, democracy in general, equality of labour democracy, etc. (as Kautsky, Martov and other heroes of the Berne yellow International do), thereby only reveal their petty-bourgeois, philistine nature and ideologically slavishly follow in the wake of the bourgeoisie. The correct solution of this problem can be found only in a concrete study of the specific relations between the specific class which has conquered political power, namely, the proletariat, and the whole non-proletarian, and also semi-proletarian, mass of the working population—relations which do not take shape in fantastically harmonious, “ideal” conditions, but in the real conditions of the frantic resistance of the bourgeoisie which assumes many and diverse forms.

The vast majority of the population—and all the more so of the working population—of any capitalist country, including Russia, have thousands of times experienced, themselves and through their kith and kin, the oppression of capital, the plunder and every sort of tyranny it perpetrates. The imperialist war, i.e., the slaughter of ten million people in order to decide whether British or German capital was to have supremacy in plundering the whole world, has greatly intensified these ordeals, has increased and deepened them, and has made the people realise their meaning. Hence the inevitable sympathy displayed by the vast majority of the population, particularly the working people, for the proletariat, because it is with heroic courage and revolutionary ruthlessness throwing off the yoke of capital, overthrowing the exploiters, suppressing their resistance, and shedding its blood to pave the road for the creation of the new society, in which there will be no room for exploiters.

Great and inevitable as may be their petty-bourgeois vacillations and their tendency to go back to bourgeois “order”, under the “wing” of the bourgeoisie, the non-proletarian and semi-



proletarian mass of the working population cannot but recognise the moral and political authority of the proletariat, who are not only overthrowing the exploiters and suppressing their resistance, but are building a new and higher social bond, a social discipline, the discipline of class-conscious and united working people, who know no yoke and no authority except the authority of their own unity, of their own, more class-conscious, bold, solid, revolutionary and steadfast vanguard.

In order to achieve victory, in order to build and consolidate socialism, the proletariat must fulfil a twofold or dual task: first, it must, by its supreme heroism in the revolutionary struggle against capital, win over the entire mass of the working and exploited people; it must win them over, organise them and lead them in the struggle to overthrow the bourgeoisie and utterly suppress their resistance. Secondly, it must lead the whole mass of the working and exploited people, as well as all the petty-bourgeois groups, on to the road of new economic development, towards the creation of a new social bond, a new labour discipline, a new organisation of labour, which will combine the last word in science and capitalist technology with the mass association of class-conscious workers creating large-scale socialist industry.

The second task is more difficult than the first, for it cannot possibly be fulfilled by single acts of heroic fervour: it requires the most prolonged, most persistent and most difficult mass heroism in *plain, everyday* work. But this task is more essential than the first, because, in the last analysis, the deepest source of strength for victories over the bourgeoisie and the sole guarantee of the durability and permanence of these victories can only be a new and higher mode of social production, the substitution of large-scale socialist production for capitalist and petty-bourgeois production.

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"Communist subbotniks" are of such enormous historical significance precisely because they demonstrate the conscious and voluntary initiative of the workers in developing the productivity of labour, in adopting a new labour discipline, in creating socialist conditions of economy and life.

J. Jacoby, one of the few, in fact it would be more correct to say one of the exceptionally rare, German bourgeois democrats who, after the lessons of 1870-71, went over not to chauvinism or national-liberalism, but to socialism, once said that the formation of a single trade union was of greater historical importance than the battle of Sadowa.<sup>90</sup> This is true. The battle of Sadowa

decided the supremacy of one of two bourgeois monarchies, the Austrian or the Prussian, in creating a German national capitalist state. The formation of one trade union was a small step towards the world victory of the proletariat over the bourgeoisie. And we may similarly say that the first communist subbotnik, organised by the workers of the Moscow-Kazan Railway in Moscow on May 10, 1919, was of greater historical significance than any of the victories of Hindenburg, or of Foch and the British, in the 1914-18 imperialist war. The victories of the imperialists mean the slaughter of millions of workers for the sake of the profits of the Anglo-American and French multimillionaires, they are the atrocities of doomed capitalism, bloated with over-eating and rotting alive. The communist subbotnik organised by the workers of the Moscow-Kazan Railway is one of the cells of the new, socialist society, which brings to all the peoples of the earth emancipation from the yoke of capital and from wars.

The bourgeois gentlemen and their hangers-on, including the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries, who are wont to regard themselves as the representatives of "public opinion", naturally jeer at the hopes of the Communists, call those hopes "a baobab tree in a mignonette pot", sneer at the insignificance of the number of subbotniks compared with the vast number of cases of thieving, idleness, lower productivity, spoilage of raw materials and finished goods, etc. Our reply to these gentlemen is that if the bourgeois intellectuals had dedicated their knowledge to assisting the working people instead of giving it to the Russian and foreign capitalists in order to restore their power, the revolution would have proceeded more rapidly and more peacefully. But this is utopian, for the issue is decided by the class struggle, and the majority of the intellectuals gravitate towards the bourgeoisie. Not with the assistance of the intellectuals will the proletariat achieve victory, but in spite of their opposition (at least in the majority of cases), removing those of them who are incorrigibly bourgeois, reforming, re-educating and subordinating the waverers, and gradually winning ever larger sections of them to its side. Gloating over the difficulties and setbacks of the revolution, sowing panic, preaching a return to the past—these are all weapons and methods of class struggle of the bourgeois intellectuals. The proletariat will not allow itself to be deceived by them.

If we get down to brass tacks, however, has it ever happened in history that a new mode of production has taken root immediately, without a long succession of setbacks, blunders and relapses? Half a century after the abolition of serfdom there were still quite a number of survivals of serfdom in the Russian country-

side. Half a century after the abolition of slavery in America the position of the Negroes was still very often one of semi-slavery. The bourgeois intellectuals, including the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries, are true to themselves in serving capital and in continuing to use absolutely false arguments—before the proletarian revolution they accused us of being utopian; after the revolution they demand that we wipe out all traces of the past with fantastic rapidity!

We are not utopians, however, and we know the real value of bourgeois “arguments”; we also know that for some time after the revolution traces of the old ethics will inevitably predominate over the young shoots of the new. When the new has just been born the old always remains stronger than it for some time; this is always the case in nature and in social life. Jeering at the feebleness of the young shoots of the new order, cheap scepticism of the intellectuals and the like—these are, essentially, methods of bourgeois class struggle against the proletariat, a defence of capitalism against socialism. We must carefully study the feeble new shoots, we must devote the greatest attention to them, do everything to promote their growth and “nurture” them. Some of them will inevitably perish. We cannot vouch that precisely the “communist subbotniks” will play a particularly important role. But that is not the point. The point is to foster each and every shoot of the new; and life will select the most viable. If the Japanese scientist, in order to help mankind vanquish syphilis, had the patience to test six hundred and five preparations before he developed a six hundred and sixth which met definite requirements, then those who want to solve a more difficult problem, namely, to vanquish capitalism, must have the perseverance to try hundreds and thousands of new methods, means and weapons of struggle in order to elaborate the most suitable of them.

The “communist subbotniks” are so important because they were initiated by workers who were by no means placed in exceptionally good conditions, by workers of various specialities, and some with no speciality at all, just unskilled labourers, who are living under *ordinary*, i.e., *exceedingly hard*, conditions. We all know very well the main cause of the decline in the productivity of labour that is to be observed not only in Russia, but all over the world; it is ruin and impoverishment, embitterment and weariness caused by the imperialist war, sickness and malnutrition. The latter is first in importance. Starvation—that is the cause. And in order to do away with starvation, productivity of labour must be raised in agriculture, in transport and in industry. So, we get a sort of vicious circle: in order to raise productivity of labour we must save ourselves from starvation, and

in order to save ourselves from starvation we must raise productivity of labour.

We know that in practice such contradictions are solved by breaking the vicious circle, by bringing about a radical change in the temper of the people, by the heroic initiative of the individual groups which often plays a decisive role against the background of such a radical change. The unskilled labourers and railway workers of Moscow (of course, we have in mind the majority of them, and not a handful of profiteers, officials and other whiteguards) are working people who are living in desperately hard conditions. They are constantly underfed, and now, before the new harvest is gathered, with the general worsening of the food situation, they are actually starving. And yet these starving workers, surrounded by the malicious counter-revolutionary agitation of the bourgeoisie, the Mensheviks and the Socialist-Revolutionaries, are organising "communist subbotniks", working overtime *without any pay*, and achieving an *enormous increase in the productivity of labour* in spite of the fact that they are weary, tormented, and exhausted by malnutrition. Is this not supreme heroism? Is this not the beginning of a change of momentous significance?

In the last analysis, productivity of labour is the most important, the principal thing for the victory of the new social system. Capitalism created a productivity of labour unknown under serfdom. Capitalism can be utterly vanquished, and will be utterly vanquished by socialism creating a new and much higher productivity of labour. This is a very difficult matter and must take a long time; but *it has been started*, and that is the main thing. If in starving Moscow, in the summer of 1919, the starving workers who had gone through four trying years of imperialist war and another year and a half of still more trying civil war could start this great work, how will things develop later when we triumph in the civil war and win peace?

Communism is the higher productivity of labour—compared with that existing under capitalism—of voluntary, class-conscious and united workers employing advanced techniques. Communist subbotniks are extraordinarily valuable as the *actual* beginning of *communism*; and this is a very rare thing, because we are in a stage when "only the *first steps* in the transition from capitalism to communism are being taken" (as our Party Programme<sup>91</sup> quite rightly says).

Communism begins when the *rank-and-file* workers display an enthusiastic concern that is undaunted by arduous toil to increase the productivity of labour, husband *every* *poond* of grain, coal, iron and other products, which do not accrue to the workers personally or to their "close" kith and kin, but to their "dis-

tant" kith and kin, i.e., to society as a whole, to tens and hundreds of millions of people united first in one socialist state, and then in a union of Soviet republics.

In *Capital*, Karl Marx ridicules the pompous and grandiloquent bourgeois-democratic great charter of liberty and the rights of man, ridicules all this phrase-mongering about liberty, equality and fraternity *in general*, which dazzles the petty bourgeois and philistines of all countries, including the present despicable heroes of the despicable Berne International. Marx contrasts these pompous declarations of rights to the plain, modest, practical, simple manner in which the question is presented by the proletariat—the legislative enactment of a shorter working day is a typical example of such treatment. The aptness and profundity of Marx's observation become the clearer and more obvious to us the more the content of the proletarian revolution unfolds. The "formulas" of genuine communism differ from the pompous, intricate, and solemn phraseology of the Kautskys, the Mensheviks and the Socialist-Revolutionaries and their beloved "brethren" of Berne in that they reduce everything to the *conditions of labour*. Less chatter about "labour democracy", about "liberty, equality and fraternity", about "government by the people", and all such stuff; the class-conscious workers and peasants of our day see through these pompous phrases of the bourgeois intellectual and discern the trickery as easily as a person of ordinary common sense and experience, when glancing at the irreproachably "polished" features and immaculate appearance of the "fain fellow, dontcher know", immediately and unerringly puts him down as "in all probability, a scoundrel".

Fewer pompous phrases, more plain, *everyday* work, concern for the pood of grain and the pood of coal! More concern about providing this pood of grain and pood of coal needed by the hungry workers and ragged and barefoot peasants *not* by *haggling*, not in a capitalist manner, but by the conscious, voluntary, boundlessly heroic labour of plain working men like the unskilled labourers and railwaymen of the Moscow-Kazan line.

We must all admit that vestiges of the bourgeois-intellectual phrase-mongering approach to questions of the revolution are in evidence at every step, everywhere, even in our own ranks. Our press, for example, does little to fight these rotten survivals of the rotten, bourgeois-democratic past; it does little to foster the simple, modest, ordinary but viable shoots of genuine communism.

Take the position of women. In this field, not a single democratic party in the world, not even in the most advanced bourgeois republic, has done in decades so much as a hundredth part of what we did in our very first year in power. We really razed to

the ground the infamous laws placing women in a position of inequality, restricting divorce and surrounding it with disgusting formalities, denying recognition to children born out of wedlock, enforcing a search for their fathers, etc., laws numerous survivals of which, to the shame of the bourgeoisie and of capitalism, are to be found in all civilised countries. We have a thousand times the right to be proud of what we have done in this field. But the more *thoroughly* we have cleared the ground of the lumber of the old, bourgeois laws and institutions, the clearer it is to us that we have only cleared the ground to build on but are not yet building.

Notwithstanding all the laws emancipating woman, she continues to be a *domestic slave*, because *petty housework* crushes, strangles, stultifies and degrades her, chains her to the kitchen and the nursery, and she wastes her labour on barbarously unproductive, petty, nerve-racking, stultifying and crushing drudgery. The real *emancipation of women*, real communism, will begin only where and when an all-out struggle begins (led by the proletariat wielding the state power) against this petty housekeeping, or rather when its *wholesale transformation* into a large-scale socialist economy begins.

Do we in practice pay sufficient attention to this question, which in theory every Communist considers indisputable? Of course not. Do we take proper care of the *shoots* of communism which already exist in this sphere? Again the answer is *no*. Public catering establishments, nurseries, kindergartens—here we have examples of these shoots, here we have the simple, everyday means, involving nothing pompous, grandiloquent or ceremonial, which can *really emancipate women*, really lessen and abolish their inequality with men as regards their role in social production and public life. These means are not new, they (like all the material prerequisites for socialism) were created by large-scale capitalism. But under capitalism they remained, first, a rarity, and secondly—which is particularly important—either *profit-making* enterprises, with all the worst features of speculation, profiteering, cheating and fraud, or “acrobatics of bourgeois charity”, which the best workers rightly hated and despised.

There is no doubt that the number of these institutions in our country has increased enormously and that they are *beginning* to change in character. There is no doubt that we have far more *organising talent* among the working and peasant women than we are aware of, that we have far more people than we know of who can organise practical work, with the co-operation of large numbers of workers and of still larger numbers of consumers, without that abundance of talk, fuss, squabbling and chatter about plans, systems, etc., with which our big-headed “intel-

lectuals" or half-baked "Communists" are "affected". But we *do not nurse* these shoots of the new as we should.

Look at the bourgeoisie. How very well they know how to advertise what *they* need! See how millions of copies of *their* newspapers extol what the capitalists regard as "model" enterprises, and how "model" bourgeois institutions are made an object of national pride! Our press does not take the trouble, or hardly ever, to describe the best catering establishments or nurseries, in order, by daily insistence, to get some of them turned into models of their kind. It does not give them enough publicity, does not describe in detail the saving in human labour, the conveniences for the consumer, the economy of products, the emancipation of women from domestic slavery, the improvement in sanitary conditions, that can be achieved with *exemplary communist work* and extended to the whole of society, to all working people.

Exemplary production, exemplary communist subbotniks, exemplary care and conscientiousness in procuring and distributing every pood of grain, exemplary catering establishments, exemplary cleanliness in such-and-such a workers' house, in such-and-such a block, should all receive ten times more attention and care from our press, as well as from *every* workers' and peasants' organisation, than they receive now. All these are shoots of communism, and it is our common and primary duty to nurse them. Difficult as our food and production situation is, in the year and a half of Bolshevik rule there has been undoubted progress *all along the line*: grain procurements have increased from 30 million poods (from August 1, 1917 to August 1, 1918) to 100 million poods (from August 1, 1918 to May 1, 1919); vegetable gardening has expanded, the margin of unsown land has diminished, railway transport has begun to improve despite the enormous fuel difficulties, and so on. Against this general background, and with the support of the proletarian state power, the shoots of communism will not wither; they will grow and blossom into complete communism.

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We must give very great thought to the significance of the "communist subbotniks", in order that we may draw all the very important practical lessons that follow from this great beginning.

The first and main lesson is that this beginning must be given every assistance. The word "commune" is being handled much too freely. Any kind of enterprise started by Communists or with their participation is very often at once declared to be a "com-

mune", it being not infrequently forgotten that this *very honourable title* must be *won* by prolonged and persistent effort, by *practical* achievement in genuine communist development.

That is why, in my opinion, the decision that has matured in the minds of the majority of the members of the Central Executive Committee to *repeal* the decree of the Council of People's Commissars, as far as it pertains to the title "consumers' communes",<sup>92</sup> is quite right. Let the title be simpler—and, incidentally, the defects and shortcomings of the *initial* stages of the new organisational work will not be blamed on the "communes", but (as in all fairness they should be) on *bad* Communists. It would be a good thing to eliminate the word "commune" from *common* use, to prohibit every Tom, Dick and Harry from grabbing at it, or to *allow this title to be borne only* by genuine communes, which have really demonstrated in practice (and have proved by the unanimous recognition of the whole of the surrounding population) that they are capable of organising their work in a communist manner. First show that you are capable of working without remuneration in the interests of society, in the interests of all the working people, show that you are capable of "working in a revolutionary way", that you are capable of raising productivity of labour, of organising the work in an exemplary manner, and then hold out your hand for the honourable title "commune"!'

In this respect, the "communist subbotniks" are a most valuable exception; for the unskilled labourers and railwaymen of the Moscow-Kazan Railway *first demonstrated by deed* that they are capable of working like *Communists*, and then adopted the title of "communist subbotniks" for their undertaking. We must see to it and make sure that in future anyone who calls his enterprise, institution or undertaking a commune *without having proved* this by hard work and practical *success in prolonged effort*, by exemplary and truly communist organisation, is mercilessly ridiculed and pilloried as a charlatan or a windbag.

That great beginning, the "communist subbotniks", must also be utilised for another purpose, namely, to *purge* the Party. In the early period following the revolution, when the mass of "honest" and philistine-minded people was particularly timorous, and when the bourgeois intellectuals to a man, including, of course, the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries, played the lackey to the bourgeoisie and carried on sabotage, it was absolutely inevitable that adventurers and other pernicious elements should hitch themselves to the ruling party. There never has been, and there never can be, a revolution without that. The whole point is that the ruling party should be able, relying on a sound and strong advanced class, to purge its ranks.



We started this work long ago. It must be continued steadily and untiringly. The mobilisation of Communists for the war helped us in this respect: the cowards and scoundrels fled from the Party's ranks. Good riddance! *Such* a reduction in the Party's membership means an *enormous increase* in its strength and weight. We must continue the purge, and that new beginning, the "communist subbotniks", must be utilised for this purpose: members should be accepted into the Party only after six months', say, "trial", or "probation", at "working in a revolutionary way". A similar test should be demanded of *all* members of the Party who joined after October 25, 1917, and who have not proved by some special work or service that they are absolutely reliable, loyal and capable of being Communists.

The purging of the Party, through the steadily *increasing demands* it makes in regard to working in a genuinely communist way, will improve the state *apparatus* and will bring much nearer the *final transition* of the peasants to the side of the revolutionary proletariat.

Incidentally, the "communist" subbotniks" have thrown a remarkably strong light on the class character of the state apparatus under the dictatorship of the proletariat. The Central Committee of the Party drafts a letter on "working in a revolutionary way".\* The idea is suggested by the Central Committee of a party with from 100,000 to 200,000 members (I assume that that is the number that will remain after a thorough purging; at present the membership is larger).

The idea is taken up by the workers organised in trade unions. In Russia and the Ukraine they number about four million. The overwhelming majority of them are for the state power of the proletariat, for proletarian dictatorship. Two hundred thousand and four million—such is the ratio of the "gear-wheels", if one may so express it. Then follow the *tens of millions* of peasants, who are divided into three main groups: the most numerous and the one standing closest to the proletariat is that of the semi-proletarians or poor peasants; then come the middle peasants, and lastly the numerically very small group of kulaks or rural bourgeoisie.

As long as it is possible to trade in grain and to make profit out of famine, the peasant will remain (and this will for some time be inevitable under the dictatorship of the proletariat) a semi-working man, a semi-profitteer. As a profiteer he is hostile to us, hostile to the proletarian state; he is inclined to agree with the bourgeoisie and their faithful lackeys, up to and including the Menshevik Sher or the Socialist-Revolutionary B. Chernen-

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\* See pp 157-59 of the present volume.—*Ed.*

kov, who stand for freedom to trade in grain. But *as a working man*, the peasant is a friend of the proletarian state, a most loyal ally of the worker in the struggle against the landowner and against the capitalist. As working men, the peasants, the vast mass of them, the peasant millions, support the state "machine" which is headed by the one or two hundred thousand Communists of the proletarian vanguard, and which consists of millions of organised proletarians.

A state more democratic, in the true sense of the word, one more closely connected with the working and exploited people, has *never yet existed*.

It is precisely proletarian work such as that put into "communist subbotniks" that will win the complete respect and love of peasants for the proletarian state. Such work and such work alone will completely convince the peasant that we are right, that communism is right, and make him our devoted ally, and, hence, will lead to the complete elimination of our food difficulties, to the complete victory of communism over capitalism in the matter of the production and distribution of grain, to the unqualified consolidation of communism.

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Signed *V. Lenin*

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# **ALL OUT FOR THE FIGHT AGAINST DENIKIN!**

**LETTER OF THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE  
OF THE RUSSIAN COMMUNIST PARTY (BOLSHEVIKS)  
TO PARTY ORGANISATIONS<sup>23</sup>**

Comrades,

This is one of the most critical, probably even the most critical moment for the socialist revolution. Those who defend the exploiters, the landowners and capitalists, in Russia and abroad (primarily in Britain and France) are making a desperate effort to restore the power of those who seize the results of the people's labour, the landowners and exploiters of Russia, in order to bolster up their power, which is waning all over the world. The British and French capitalists have failed in their plan to conquer the Ukraine using their own troops; they have failed in their support of Kolchak in Siberia; the Red Army, heroically advancing in the Urals with the help of the Urals workers who are rising to a man, is nearing Siberia to liberate it from the incredible tyranny and brutality of the capitalists who rule there. Lastly, the British and French imperialists have failed in their plan to seize Petrograd by means of a counter-revolutionary conspiracy with the participation of Russian monarchists, Cadets, Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries (not excluding even Left Socialist-Revolutionaries).

The foreign capitalists are now making a desperate effort to restore the yoke of capital by means of an onslaught by Denikin, whom they have supplied with officers, shells, tanks, etc., etc., as they once did Kolchak.

All the forces of the workers and peasants, all the forces of the Soviet Republic, must be harnessed to repulse Denikin's onslaught and to defeat him, without checking the Red Army's victorious advance into the Urals and Siberia. That is the

## MAIN TASK OF THE MOMENT

All Communists first and foremost, all sympathisers with them, all honest workers and peasants, all Soviet officials must *pull themselves together like soldiers* and concentrate *to the maximum their work*, their efforts and their concern *directly on the tasks of the war*, on the speedy repulse of Denikin's attack, curtailing and rearranging all their other activities to allow for this task.

The Soviet Republic is besieged by the enemy. It must become *a single military camp*, not in word but in deed.

All the work of all institutions must be adapted to the war and placed on a military footing!

Collegiate methods are essential for the conduct of the affairs of the workers' and peasants' state. But any expansion of these methods, any distortion of them resulting in red tape and irresponsibility, any conversion of collegiate bodies into talk-shops is a supreme evil, an evil which must be halted at all costs as quickly as possible and by whatever the means.

Collegiate methods must not exceed an absolutely indispensable minimum in respect both to the number of members in the committees and to the efficient conduct of work; "speechifying" must be prohibited, opinions must be exchanged as rapidly as possible and confined to information and precisely formulated practical proposals.

Whenever there is the slightest possibility, such methods must be reduced to the briefest discussion of only the most important questions in the narrowest collegiate bodies, while the *practical management* of institutions, enterprises, undertakings or tasks should be entrusted *to one comrade*, known for his firmness, resolution, boldness and ability to conduct practical affairs and who enjoys the greatest confidence. At any rate, and under all circumstances without exception, collegiate management must be accompanied by the precisest definition of the personal responsibility of *every* individual for a *precisely* defined job. To refer to collegiate methods as an excuse for irresponsibility is a most dangerous evil, threatening all who have not had very extensive experience in efficient collective work; in the army it all too often leads to inevitable disaster, chaos, panic, division of authority and defeat.

A no less dangerous evil is organisational fuss or organisational fantasies. The reorganisation of work necessitated by the war must under no circumstances lead to the reorganisation of institutions, still less to the hasty formation of new institutions. That is absolutely impermissible and would only lead to chaos. The reorganisation of work should consist in suspending

for a time institutions which are not absolutely essential, or in reducing their size to a certain extent. But all war work must be conducted *entirely and exclusively through already existing* military institutions, by improving, strengthening, expanding and supporting them. The creation of special "defence committees" or "revcoms" (revolutionary or revolutionary military committees) is permissible, first, only by way of exception, secondly, only with the approval of the military authority concerned or the superior Soviet authority, and, thirdly, only provided this last condition is complied with.

### THE TRUTH ABOUT KOLCHAK AND DENIKIN MUST BE EXPLAINED TO THE PEOPLE

Kolchak and Denikin are the chief, and the only serious, enemies of the Soviet Republic. If it were not for the help they are getting from the Entente (Britain, France, America) they would have collapsed long ago. It is only the help of the Entente which makes them strong. Nevertheless, they are still forced to deceive the people, to pretend from time to time that they support "democracy", a "constituent assembly", "government by the people", etc. The Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries are only too willing to be duped.

The truth about Kolchak (and his double, Denikin) has now been revealed in full. The shooting of *tens of thousands* of workers. The shooting even of Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries. The flogging of peasants of entire districts. The public flogging of women. The absolutely unbridled power of the officers, the sons of landowners. Endless looting. Such is the truth about Kolchak and Denikin. Increasing numbers of people even among the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries, who themselves betrayed the workers and sided with Kolchak and Denikin, are forced to admit this truth.

All our agitation and propaganda must serve to inform the people of the truth. It must be explained that the alternative is either Kolchak and Denikin or Soviet power, the power (dictatorship) of the workers. There is no middle course; there can be no middle course. Particular use must be made of the testimony of non-Bolshevik eyewitnesses, of Mensheviks, Socialist-Revolutionaries, and non-party people who *have been* in the areas overrun by Kolchak or Denikin. Let every worker and peasant know what the issue of the struggle is, what awaits him in the event of a victory for Kolchak or Denikin.

## WORK AMONG MEN CALLED UP FOR SERVICE

One of our chief concerns must now be work among those liable to mobilisation, in aid of mobilisation, and among those already mobilised. Wherever mobilised men are concentrated, or where there are garrisons, and especially training depots, etc., every single Communist and sympathiser must be brought into action. They must all without exception unite and work, some daily, others, say, four or eight hours per week, in aid of mobilisation and among mobilised men, among the soldiers of the local garrison; it must be done in a properly organised manner, of course, each person being assigned appropriate work by the local Party organisation and the military authorities.

Non-party people or members of parties other than the Communist Party are naturally not in a position to carry on ideological work against Denikin or Kolchak. But to release them for that reason from all work would be impermissible. Every means must be sought that would compel the whole population (and the *wealthier sections*, both in town and country, in the first place) to contribute their share, in one form or another, to help mobilisation or the mobilised.

Measures to further the quickest and most effective training of the mobilised should form a special category of aid. The Soviet government is calling up all ex-officers, non-commissioned officers, etc. The Communist Party, as well as all sympathisers and all workers, must assist the workers' and peasants' state, first, by helping to round up all ex-officers, non-commissioned officers, etc., who do not report for service, and, secondly, by organising, under the control of the Party organisation or attached to it, groups of those who have had theoretical or practical (e.g., in the imperialist war) military training and who are capable of doing their share.

## WORK AMONG DESERTERS

An obvious change for the better has latterly taken place in the fight against desertion. In a number of gubernias deserters have begun to return to the army en masse; it is no exaggeration to say that deserters are flocking to the Red Army. The reasons are, first, that Party comrades are working more efficiently and systematically, and, secondly, the peasants' growing realisation that Kolchak and Denikin mean the restoration of a regime which is worse than the tsarist, the restoration of *slavery* for the workers and peasants, and of floggings, robbery and insults on the part of the officers and scions of the nobility.

We must therefore everywhere lay special stress on the work among deserters to bring them back into the army, and must *spare no effort* in this work. That is one of the primary and urgent tasks of the day.

Incidentally, the fact that deserters can be influenced by persuasion and that the persuasion can be *effective* shows that the workers' state has a *special* attitude towards the peasants, and in this it differs from the landowner or capitalist state. The rule of the bludgeon or the rule of hunger—that is what constitutes the sole source of discipline of the latter two forms of state. A *different* source of discipline is possible in the case of the workers' state, or the dictatorship of the proletariat—that of persuasion of the peasants by the workers, a comradely alliance between them. When you hear the accounts of eyewitnesses that in such-and-such a gubernia (Ryazan, for instance) thousands upon thousands of deserters are returning voluntarily, that the appeal at meetings to "comrades deserters" sometimes has a success which beggars all description, you begin to realise how much untapped *strength* there is in this comradely alliance between workers and peasants. The peasant has his *prejudice*, which makes him inclined to support the capitalist, the Socialist-Revolutionary, and "freedom to trade", but he also has his *sound judgement*, which is impelling him more and more towards an alliance with the workers.

## DIRECT AID TO THE ARMY

What our army needs most is *supplies*—clothing, footwear, arms, shells. With the country impoverished as it is, an immense effort has to be made to satisfy the army's needs, and it is only the assistance which the capitalist robbers of Britain, France and America are so lavishly rendering Kolchak and Denikin that saves them from inevitable disaster due to shortage of supplies.

But impoverished though Russia is, she still has endless resources which we have not yet utilised, and often have shown *no ability* to utilise. There are still many undisclosed or uninspected military stores, plenty of production potentialities which are being overlooked, partly owing to the deliberate sabotage of officials, partly owing to red tape, bureaucracy, inefficiency and incompetence—all those "sins of the past" which so inevitably and so drastically weigh upon every revolution which makes a "leap" into a new social order.

Direct aid to the army in this respect is particularly important. The institutions in charge of it are particularly in need of "fresh blood", of outside assistance, of the voluntary, vigorous

and heroic *initiative* of the workers and peasants *in the localities*.

We must appeal as widely as possible to the initiative of all class-conscious workers and peasants, and of all Soviet officials; we must test in different localities and in different fields of work *different* forms of assistance to the army in this respect. "Work in a revolutionary way" is far less in evidence here than in other spheres, yet "work in a revolutionary way" is needed here *far more*.

The collection of arms from the population is an integral part of this work. It is natural that plenty of arms should have been hidden by the peasants and the bourgeoisie in a country which has been through four years of imperialist war followed by two people's revolutions—it was inevitable that this should happen. But we must combat it *with all our might* now, in face of Denikin's menacing onslaught. Whoever conceals or helps to conceal arms is guilty of a grave crime against the workers and peasants and deserves to be shot, for he is responsible for the death of thousands upon thousands of the finest Red Army men, who not infrequently perish only because of a shortage of arms at the fronts.

The Petrograd comrades succeeded in unearthing thousands and thousands of rifles when they conducted mass searches in a strictly organised way. The rest of Russia must not lag behind Petrograd and must at all costs overtake and outstrip it.

On the other hand, there is no doubt that the largest numbers of rifles are hidden by the peasants, and often without the least evil intention, but solely from an ingrained distrust of any "state", etc. If we have been able to do much, very much (in the best gubernias) by means of *persuasion*, skilful agitation and a proper approach to get deserters to return to the Red Army voluntarily, there can be no doubt that just as much, if not more, can be done, and should be done, to secure a voluntary return of arms.

Workers and peasants, look for concealed rifles and turn them over to the army! By doing so you will save yourselves from being massacred, shot, flogged wholesale and robbed by Kolchak and Denikin!

## CURTAILMENT OF WORK NOT FOR THE WAR

To carry out even a part of the work briefly outlined above we shall need more and more workers, drawn, moreover, from the ranks of the most reliable, devoted and energetic Communists. But where are they to come from, bearing in mind the universal complaints about the dearth of such workers and the over-fatigue they are suffering from?



There can be no doubt that these complaints are largely justified. If anyone were to gauge exactly how thin is that stratum of advanced workers and Communists who with the support and sympathy of the worker and peasant masses have administered Russia in these last twenty months, it would seem truly incredible. Yet we administered with signal success, building socialism, overcoming unparalleled difficulties, and vanquishing enemies, directly or indirectly connected with the bourgeoisie, that raised their heads everywhere. We have already vanquished all enemies except one—the Entente, the all-powerful imperialist bourgeoisie of Britain, France and America. And we have broken one of the arms of this enemy too—Kolchak. We are only threatened by his other arm—Denikin.

Fresh labour-power for the administration of the state and to carry out the tasks of the dictatorship of the proletariat are rapidly emerging in the shape of the worker and peasant youth who are most earnestly, zealously and fervidly learning, digesting the new impressions of the new order, throwing off the husk of old, capitalist and bourgeois-democratic prejudices, and moulding themselves into even firmer Communists than the older generation.

But however rapidly this new stratum may be emerging, however rapidly it may be learning and maturing in the fire of the Civil War and the frantic resistance of the bourgeoisie, all the same it cannot, in the next few months, supply us with a *trained* staff for the administration of the state. Yet it is precisely the next few months, the summer and autumn of 1919, that count, for it is essential *to decide* the struggle against Denikin, and it must be done *immediately*.

In order to obtain a large number of well-trained workers to strengthen the war effort we must *reduce in size* a whole number of branches and institutions, not doing war work, or, rather, those not directly connected with the war, but doing Soviet work; we must *reorganise* on these lines (i.e., on the lines of reduction) all institutions and enterprises which are *not absolutely indispensable*.

Take, as a case in point, the Scientific and Technological Department of the Supreme Economic Council. This is a highly valuable institution, one indispensable for the building of full-scale socialism and to account for and distribute all our scientific and technological forces properly. But is such an institution absolutely indispensable? Of course not. To assign to it people who could and should be immediately employed in urgent and absolutely indispensable communist work *in the army* or *directly* for the army would, at the present juncture, be a downright crime.

There are quite a number of such institutions and departments of institutions in the centre and in the localities. In our efforts to achieve socialism in full we had to begin to set up such institutions immediately. But we would be fools or criminals, if, in the face of Denikin's formidable attack, we were unable to *reform our ranks* in such a way as to *suspend* or *reduce everything* that is not absolutely indispensable.

We must not give way to panic or succumb to the organisational urge and must not reorganise any institutions nor close them down altogether, nor—which is particularly harmful when being done in haste—must we begin to build new institutions. What we must do is to *suspend* for three, four or five months *all* institutions or departments of institutions, both in the centre and in the localities, which are not absolutely indispensable, or, if it is not possible to suspend them altogether, *reduce* them for the same (approximately) period, reduce them to the greatest possible extent, in other words, reduce the work to an absolutely indispensable minimum.

Inasmuch as our main purpose is to secure at once a large number of well-trained, experienced, devoted and tested Communists or socialist sympathisers for military work, we can incur the risk of temporarily leaving many of the heavily curtailed institutions (or departments of institutions) *without a single Communist*, of placing them exclusively in the hands of bourgeois executives. That is not a big risk, for it is only institutions which are not absolutely indispensable that are involved, and while there will certainly be a loss from the weakening of their (semi-suspended) activities, it will not be a great loss, and one which at any rate will not be fatal to us. Whereas insufficient energy in strengthening war work, and strengthening it immediately and considerably, may prove fatal to us. This must be clearly understood and all the necessary conclusions drawn from it.

If every manager of a government department or of a division of a government department in every gubernia, uyezd, etc., if every Communist nucleus, without losing a moment, asks, is such-and-such an institution, such-and-such a department absolutely indispensable, shall we perish if we suspend it or reduce its activities by nine-tenths and leave no Communists in it at all?—if the posing of this question is followed by speedy and resolute reduction of work and withdrawal of Communists (together with their absolutely reliable assistants among the sympathisers or non-party people), in a very short time we shall have hundreds upon hundreds of persons for work in the political departments of the army, as commissars, etc. And then we shall have a very good chance of defeating Denikin, just as we have defeated the much stronger Kolchak.

## WORK IN THE FRONT ZONE

The front zone in the Russian Socialist Federative Soviet Republic has greatly increased in the past few weeks and has undergone an extremely rapid change. This is a harbinger or concomitant of the decisive moment of the war, of its approaching concluding phase.

On the one hand, a vast front zone west of the Urals and in the Ural Mountains proper has become our front zone owing to the victories of the Red Army, the disintegration of Kolchak, and the growth of revolution in Kolchakia. On the other hand, *an even larger* zone near Petrograd and in the South has become a front zone owing to our losses, owing to the immense advance made by the enemy towards Petrograd and the advance from the South into the Ukraine and towards the centre of Russia.

Work in the front zone is assuming cardinal importance.

In the Cis-Urals area, where the Red Army is rapidly advancing, there is a natural desire among army workers—commissars, members of political departments, etc.—as well as among local workers and peasants, to settle down in the newly won localities for constructive Soviet work, a desire which is the more natural, the greater the war fatigue and the more distressful the picture of the destruction wrought by Kolchak. But nothing could be more dangerous than to yield to this desire. It would threaten to weaken our offensive, to retard it, and to increase Kolchak's chances of recovering his strength. It would be a downright crime against the revolution on our part.

Under no circumstances must a single extra worker be taken from the Eastern Army for local work!\* Under no circumstances can the offensive be weakened! The only chance we have of complete victory is for the entire population of the Urals area, who have experienced the horrors of Kolchak "democracy", to take part in it to a man, and to continue the offensive into Siberia until the *complete victory* of the revolution in Siberia.

Let organisational work in the Cis-Urals and the Urals area be delayed, let it proceed less intensively, being done by local, young, inexperienced and weak forces alone. We shall not perish from that. But if we *weaken* the offensive against the Urals and Siberia *we shall perish*. We must *strengthen* that offensive with the forces of the insurgent workers in the Urals, with the forces of the Cis-Urals peasants, who have now learned to their cost the meaning of the "constituent" promises of the Menshevik Maisky and the Socialist-Revolutionary Chernov, and the real meaning of these promises, *i.e., Kolchak*.

Unless there is urgent need none at all should be taken, but people should be transferred from the central gubernias<sup>1</sup>

To weaken the offensive against the Urals and Siberia would be to betray the revolution, to betray the cause of the emancipation of the workers and peasants from the Kolchak yoke.

It should be remembered in connection with the work in the front zone which has only just been liberated that the main task there is to make not only the workers, but the peasants as well, put their faith in Soviet power, to explain to them in practice that Soviet power means the power of the workers and peasants, and at once to take the right course, the course adopted by the Party from the experience of twenty months of work. We must not repeat in the Urals the mistakes which were sometimes made in Great Russia and which we are rapidly learning to avoid.

In the front zone outside Petrograd and in that vast front zone which has been growing so rapidly and menacingly in the Ukraine and in the South, absolutely everything must be put on a war footing, and all work, all efforts, all thoughts subordinated to the war and only the war. Otherwise it will be impossible to repulse Denikin's attack. That is clear. And this must be clearly understood and fully put into practice.

Incidentally. A feature of Denikin's army is the large number of officers and Cossacks in it. This is an element which, having no mass force behind it, is extremely likely to engage in swift raids, in gambles, in desperate ventures, with the object of sowing panic and causing destruction for destruction's sake.

In fighting such a foe military discipline and military vigilance of the highest degree are necessary. To be caught napping or to lose one's head means losing everything. Every responsible Party and Soviet worker must bear this in mind.

Military discipline in military and all other matters!

Military vigilance and strictness, and firmness in the adoption of all measures of precaution!

## ATTITUDE TOWARDS MILITARY EXPERTS

The vast conspiracy hatched at Krasnaya Gorka<sup>94</sup> and whose purpose was the surrender of Petrograd has again brought forward and with particular emphasis the question of the military experts and of combating counter-revolution in the rear. There can be no doubt that the aggravation of the food and war situation is inevitably stimulating, and will continue to stimulate in the immediate future, still greater efforts by the counter-revolutionaries (in the Petrograd plot there participated the League of Regeneration,<sup>95</sup> Cadets, Mensheviks and Right Socialist-Revolutionaries; the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries also participated, as a separate group, it is true, but they did participate nevertheless). Nor can there

be any doubt that the military experts, like the kulaks, the bourgeois intellectuals, the Mensheviks and the Socialist-Revolutionaries, will in the near future give a bigger proportion of traitors.

But it would be an irreparable mistake and unpardonable weakness of character to raise on this account the question of changing the fundamental principles of our army policy. Hundreds and hundreds of military experts are betraying us and will betray us; we will catch them and shoot them, but thousands and tens of thousands of military experts have been working for us systematically and for a long time, and without them we could not have formed the Red Army, which has grown out of the guerrilla force of evil memory, and has been able to score brilliant victories in the East. Experienced people who head our War Department rightly point out that where the Party policy in regard to the military experts and the extirpation of the guerrilla spirit has been adhered to most strictly, where discipline is firmest, where political work among the troops and the work of the commissars is conducted most thoroughly, there, generally speaking, the number of military experts inclined to betray us is the lowest, there the opportunities for those who are so inclined to carry out their designs are the slightest, there we have no laxity in the army, there its organisation and morale are best, and there we have the most victories. The guerrilla spirit, its vestiges, remnants and survivals have been the cause of immeasurably greater misfortune, disintegration, defeats, disasters and losses in men and military equipment in our army and in the Ukrainian army than all the betrayals of the military experts.

Our Party Programme, both on the general subject of bourgeois experts, and on the particular problem of one of their varieties, the military experts, has defined the policy of the Communist Party with absolute precision. Our Party is waging and will continue to wage "a relentless struggle against the pseudo-radical but actually ignorant and conceited opinion that the working people are capable of overcoming capitalism and the bourgeois social system without learning from bourgeois specialists, without making use of their services and without undergoing the *training of a lengthy period* of work side by side with them".

At the same time, of course, the Party does not make the "slightest political concession to this bourgeois section of the population", the Party suppresses and will continue "ruthlessly to suppress any counter-revolutionary attempts on its part". Naturally, whenever such an "attempt" is made or becomes more or less probable, its "ruthless suppression" requires other qualities than the deliberateness, the cautiousness of an apprentice, which are demanded for lengthy training, and which the latter inculcates. The contradiction between the attitude of people engaged in the

"lengthy period of work side by side" with the military experts, and the attitude of people absorbed in the direct task of, "ruthlessly suppressing a counter-revolutionary attempt" of military experts might easily lead, and does lead, to friction and conflict. The same applies to the necessary changes of personnel, the shifting around sometimes of large numbers of military experts which is necessitated by instances of counter-revolutionary "attempts", and all the more by large-scale conspiracies.

We settle, and will continue to settle, such friction and conflicts in the Party way, demanding the same of all the Party organisations and insisting that not the slightest damage to practical work, not the slightest delay in the adoption of essential measures, not a shadow of hesitation in the observance of the established principles of our military policy be tolerated.

If some of our Party bodies adopt an incorrect tone towards the military experts (as was recently the case in Petrograd), or if in some cases "criticism" of military experts turns into direct hindrance to the systematic and persistent work of employing them, the Party immediately rectifies, and will rectify, such mistakes.

The chief and principal means of rectifying them is to intensify political work in the army and among the mobilised, to improve the work of the commissars in the army, to have more highly qualified commissars, to raise their level, to have them carry out *in practice* that which the Party Programme demands and which only too often is carried out far too inadequately, i.e., "the concentration of *all-round* control over the commanders (of the army) in the hands of the working class". Criticism of the military experts by outsiders, attempts to correct matters by "lightning raids" are too easy, and therefore hopeless and harmful. All those who recognise their political responsibility, who take the defects of our army to heart, let them join its ranks, either as privates or commanders, as political workers or commissars; let each work—every Party member will find a place suited to his abilities—inside the army organisation for its improvement.

The Soviet government has long been paying the greatest attention to making it possible for workers, and also peasants, Communists in particular, to master the art of war in all seriousness. This is being done at a number of establishments, institutions and courses, but still far too little is being done. There is still a lot of room here for personal initiative and personal energy. Communists, in particular, should persistently study the handling of machine-guns, artillery, armoured vehicles, etc., for here our backwardness is more telling, here the enemy's superiority, with his larger number of officers, is greater, here it is possible for an unreliable military expert to do grave harm, here the role of the Communist is important in the extreme.

## THE FIGHT AGAINST COUNTER-REVOLUTION IN THE REAR

Counter-revolution is raising its head in our rear and in our midst just as it did in July of last year.

Counter-revolution has been defeated, but by no means destroyed, and is naturally taking advantage of Denikin's victories and of the aggravation of the food shortage. And, as always, in the wake of direct and open counter-revolution, in the wake of the Black Hundreds and the Cadets, whose strength lies in their capital, their direct connections with Entente imperialism, and their understanding of the inevitability of dictatorship and their ability to exercise it (on Kolchak lines)—in their wake follow the wavering, spineless Mensheviks, Right Socialist-Revolutionaries and Left Socialist-Revolutionaries, who embellish their deeds with words.

There should be no illusions on this score! What is the "nutritive medium" which engenders counter-revolutionary activities, outbreaks, conspiracies and so forth we know full well. The medium is the bourgeoisie, the bourgeois intelligentsia, the kulaks in the countryside, and, everywhere, the "non-party" public, as well as the Socialist-Revolutionaries and the Mensheviks. We must redouble, we must increase tenfold our watch over this medium. We must multiply tenfold our vigilance, because counter-revolutionary attempts from this quarter are absolutely inevitable, precisely at the present moment and in the near future. For this reason, too, repeated attempts to blow up bridges, to foment strikes, to engage in every kind of espionage and the like, are natural. All precautions of the most intense, systematic, repeated, wholesale and unexpected kind are essential in all centres without exception where the "nutritive medium" of the counter-revolutionaries has the least chance of existing.

In regard to the Mensheviks and the Right and Left Socialist-Revolutionaries, we must draw a lesson from our most recent experience. Among their "periphery", among the public which gravitates towards them, there is an undoubted shifting away from Kolchak and Denikin towards Soviet power. We have taken cognisance of this shift, and every time it has assumed any real shape we, on our part, have taken a step to meet it. This policy of ours we shall not change under any circumstances, and generally speaking, there will no doubt be an increase in the number of "migrants" from the type of Menshevism and Socialist Revolutionism which leans towards Kolchak and Denikin to the type of Menshevism and Socialist-Revolutionism which leans towards Soviet power.

But at the present juncture the petty-bourgeois democrats,

headed by the Socialist-Revolutionaries and the Mensheviks, spineless and wavering as always, are watching to see which way the wind blows, and are swinging in the direction of the victor, Denikin. This is especially true of the "political leaders" of the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries, of the Mensheviks (of the type of Martov and Co.), of the Right Socialist-Revolutionaries (of the type of Chernov and Co.), and of their "literary groups" in general, whose members, apart from all else, are deeply offended at their political bankruptcy, and for whom hazardous ventures *against* Soviet power, therefore, have an attraction that is hardly likely to be eradicated.

We must not allow ourselves to be deceived by the words and ideology of their leaders, by their personal integrity or hypocrisy. This is important from the standpoint of their individual biographies. But it is not important from the standpoint of politics, i.e., of the relations between classes, of the relations between millions of people. Martov and Co., "in the name of the Central Committee", solemnly condemn their "activists" and threaten (eternally threaten!) to expel them from the party. But this by no means does away with the fact that the "activists" are the strongest of all among the Mensheviks, hide behind them, and carry on their work on behalf of Kolchak and Denikin. Volsky and Co. condemn Avksentyev, Chernov and Co., but this does not in the least prevent the latter from being stronger than Volsky, nor does it prevent Chernov from saying, "If it is not we who are to overthrow the Bolsheviks, and not now, then who is, and when?" The Left Socialist-Revolutionaries may "work independently" without any agreement with the reactionaries, with the Chernovs, but actually they are just as much allies of Denikin and pawns in *his* game as the late Left Socialist-Revolutionary Muravyov, the ex-commander-in-chief, who for "ideological" reasons opened the front to the Czechoslovaks and to Kolchak.

Martov, Volsky and Co. fancy themselves "superior" to both contending sides; they fancy themselves capable of creating a "third side".

This desire, even when it is sincere, still remains the illusion of the petty-bourgeois democrat, who to this day, seventy years after 1848, has still not learned the most elementary thing, namely, that in a capitalist environment only the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie or the dictatorship of the proletariat is possible, and that no third course can exist. Martov and Co. will evidently die with this illusion. That is their affair. And it is our affair to remember that in practice vacillations on the part of these people are inevitable, today in the direction of Denikin, tomorrow in the direction of the Bolsheviks. And today we must do the task of *this* day.



Our task is to put the question bluntly. What is better? To ferret out, to imprison, sometimes even to shoot hundreds of traitors from among the Cadets, non-party people, Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries, who "come out" (some with arms in hand, others with conspiracies, others still with agitation against mobilisation, like the Menshevik printers and railwaymen, etc.) *against* Soviet power, *in other words, in favour of Denikin*? Or to allow matters to reach such a pass that Kolchak and Denikin are able to slaughter, shoot and flog to death tens of thousands of workers and peasants? The choice is not difficult to make.

That is how the question stands, and not otherwise.

Whoever has not yet understood this, whoever is capable of whining over the "iniquity" of such a decision, must be given up as hopeless and held up to public ridicule and shame.

## THE POPULATION MUST BE MOBILISED FOR WAR TO A MAN

The Soviet Republic is a fortress besieged by world capital. We can concede the right to use it as a refuge from Kolchak, and the right to live in it generally, only to those who take an active part in the war and help us in every way. Hence our right and our duty to mobilise the whole population for the war to a man, some for army work in the direct meaning of the term, others for subsidiary activities of every kind in aid of the war.

To carry this out in full, an ideal organisation is required. And since our government organisation is very far from perfect (which is not in the least surprising in view of its youth, its novelty and the extraordinary difficulties which accompany its development), to attempt at once and on a wide scale anything complete or even very considerable in this sphere would be a most dangerous indulgence in fantastic organisational schemes.

But much can be done in a partial way to bring us nearer to this ideal, and the "initiative" shown by our Party workers and Soviet officials in this respect is very, very far from enough.

It will suffice here to raise this question and to draw the attention of comrades to it. There is no need to give any specific instructions or proposals.

Let us only observe that the petty-bourgeois democrats who stand nearest to the Soviets and who call themselves, by force of habit, socialists—some of the "Left" Mensheviks and the like, for example—are particularly disposed to wax indignant at the "barbaric", in their opinion, practice of taking hostages.

Let them wax indignant, but unless this is done war cannot be waged, and when the danger grows acute the use of this means

must be extended and multiplied in every sense. Not infrequently, for instance, Menshevik or yellow printers, higher railway employees or secret profiteers, kulaks, the wealthy sections of the urban (and rural) population and similar elements look upon defence against Kolchak and Denikin with an infinitely criminal and infinitely brazen attitude of indifference which grows into sabotage. Lists of such groups must be drawn up (or they must be compelled themselves to form groups in which each answers for everybody), and they must not only be put to work digging trenches, as is sometimes practised, but assigned to the most diverse and comprehensive duties for material aid to the Red Army.

The fields of the Red Army men will be better cultivated, the supply of food, tobacco and other necessities to the Red Army men will be better arranged, the danger to the lives of thousands upon thousands of workers and peasants resulting from a single conspiracy, etc., will be considerably reduced if we employ this method more widely, more comprehensively and more skilfully.

### **"WORK IN A REVOLUTIONARY WAY"**

Summing up what was said above, we arrive at a simple conclusion. What is demanded immediately and in the course of the next few months of all Communists, of all class-conscious workers and peasants, of everyone who does not want to see Kolchak and Denikin win, is an extraordinary accession of energy; what is needed is "work in a revolutionary way".

The starving, exhausted and worn-out Moscow railwaymen, both skilled and unskilled, have for the sake of victory over Kolchak inaugurated "communist subbotniks"—work without pay for several hours a week to continue until victory over Kolchak is complete—and have, moreover, developed unprecedented labour productivity, exceeding the usual productivity many times over; this goes to show that much, very much can still be done.

And we must do it.

Then we shall win.

*Central Committee of the Russian  
Communist Party (Bolsheviks)*

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# THE STATE

A LECTURE DELIVERED AT THE SVERDLOV UNIVERSITY

JULY 11, 1919

Comrades, according to the plan you have adopted and which has been conveyed to me, the subject of today's talk is the state. I do not know how familiar you are already with this subject. If I am not mistaken your courses have only just begun and this is the first time you will be tackling this subject systematically. If that is so, then it may very well happen that in the first lecture on this difficult subject I may not succeed in making my exposition sufficiently clear and comprehensible to many of my listeners. And if this should prove to be the case, I would request you not to be perturbed by the fact, because the question of the state is a most complex and difficult one, perhaps one that more than any other has been confused by bourgeois scholars, writers and philosophers. It should not therefore be expected that a thorough understanding of this subject can be obtained from one brief talk, at a first sitting. After the first talk on this subject you should make a note of the passages which you have not understood or which are not clear to you, and return to them a second, a third and a fourth time, so that what you have not understood may be further supplemented and elucidated later, both by reading and by various lectures and talks. I hope that we may manage to meet once again and that we shall then be able to exchange opinions on all supplementary questions and see what has remained most unclear. I also hope that in addition to talks and lectures you will devote some time to reading at least a few of the most important works of Marx and Engels. I have no doubt that these most important works are to be found in the lists of books and in the handbooks which are available in your library for the students of the Soviet and Party school; and although, again, some of you may at first be dismayed by the difficulty of the exposition, I must again warn you that you should not let this worry you; what is unclear at a first reading will become clear at a second reading,

or when you subsequently approach the question from a somewhat different angle. For I once more repeat that the question is so complex and has been so confused by bourgeois scholars and writers that anybody who desires to study it seriously and master it independently must attack it several times, return to it again and again and consider it from various angles in order to attain a clear, sound understanding of it. Because it is such a fundamental, such a basic question in all politics, and because not only in such stormy and revolutionary times as the present, but even in the most peaceful times, you will come across it every day in any newspaper in connection with any economic or political question it will be all the easier to return to it. Every day, in one context or another, you will be returning to the question: what is the state, what is its nature, what is its significance and what is the attitude of our Party, the party that is fighting for the overthrow of capitalism, the Communist Party—what is its attitude to the state? And the chief thing is that you should acquire, as a result of your reading, as a result of the talks and lectures you will hear on the state, the ability to approach this question independently, since you will be meeting with it on the most diverse occasions, in connection with the most trifling questions, in the most unexpected contexts and in discussions and disputes with opponents. Only when you learn to find your way about independently in this question may you consider yourself sufficiently confirmed in your convictions and able with sufficient success to defend them against anybody and at any time.

After these brief remarks, I shall proceed to deal with the question itself—what is the state, how did it arise and fundamentally what attitude to the state should be displayed by the party of the working class, which is fighting for the complete overthrow of capitalism—the Communist Party?

I have already said that you are not likely to find another question which has been so confused, deliberately and unwittingly, by representatives of bourgeois science, philosophy, jurisprudence, political economy and journalism, as the question of the state. To this day it is very often confused with religious questions; not only those professing religious doctrines (it is quite natural to expect it of them), but even people who consider themselves free from religious prejudice, very often confuse the specific question of the state with questions of religion and endeavour to build up a doctrine—very often a complex one, with an ideological, philosophical approach and argumentation—which claims that the state is something divine, something supernatural, that it is a certain force by virtue of which mankind has lived, that it is a force of divine origin which confers on people or can confer on people, or which brings with it something that is not of man, but

is given him from without. And it must be said that this doctrine is so closely bound up with the interests of the exploiting classes—the landowners and the capitalists—so serves their interests, has so deeply permeated all the customs, views and science of the gentlemen who represent the bourgeoisie, that you will meet with vestiges of it on every hand, even in the view of the state held by the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries, although they are convinced that they can regard the state with sober eyes and reject indignantly the suggestion that they are under the sway of religious prejudices. This question has been so confused and complicated because it affects the interests of the ruling classes more than any other question (yielding place in this respect only to the foundations of economic science). The doctrine of the state serves to justify social privilege, the existence of exploitation, the existence of capitalism—and that is why it would be the greatest mistake to expect impartiality on this question, to approach it in the belief that people who claim to be scientific can give you a purely scientific view on the subject. In the question of the state, in the doctrine of the state, in the theory of the state, when you have become familiar with it and have gone into it deeply enough, you will always discern the struggle between different classes, a struggle which is reflected or expressed in a conflict of views on the state, in the estimate of the role and significance of the state.

To approach this question as scientifically as possible we must cast at least a fleeting glance back on the history of the state, its emergence and development. The most reliable thing in a question of social science, and one that is most necessary in order really to acquire the habit of approaching this question correctly and not allowing oneself to get lost in the mass of detail or in the immense variety of conflicting opinion—the most important thing if one is to approach this question scientifically is not to forget the underlying historical connection, to examine every question from the standpoint of how the given phenomenon arose in history and what were the principal stages in its development, and, from the standpoint of its development, to examine what it has become today.

I hope that in studying this question of the state you will acquaint yourself with Engels's book *The Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State*. This is one of the fundamental works of modern socialism, every sentence of which can be accepted with confidence, in the assurance that it has not been said at random but is based on immense historical and political material. Undoubtedly, not all the parts of this work have been expounded in an equally popular and comprehensible way; some of them presume a reader who already possesses a certain knowledge of

history and economics. But I again repeat that you should not be perturbed if on reading this work you do not understand it at once. Very few people do. But returning to it later, when your interest has been aroused, you will succeed in understanding the greater part, if not the whole of it. I refer to this book because it gives the correct approach to the question in the sense mentioned. It begins with a historical sketch of the origin of the state.

This question, like every other—for example, that of the origin of capitalism, the exploitation of man by man, socialism, how socialism arose, what conditions gave rise to it—can be approached soundly and confidently only if we cast a glance back on the history of its development as a whole. In connection with this problem it should first of all be noted that the state has not always existed. There was a time when there was no state. It appears wherever and whenever a division of society into classes appears, whenever exploiters and exploited appear.

Before the first form of exploitation of man by man arose, the first form of division into classes—slave-owners and slaves—there existed the patriarchal family, or, as it is sometimes called, the *clan* family. (Clan—tribe; at the time people of one kin lived together.) Fairly definite traces of these primitive times have survived in the life of many primitive peoples; and if you take any work whatsoever on primitive civilisation, you will always come across more or less definite descriptions, indications and recollections of the fact that there was a time, more or less similar to primitive communism, when the division of society into slave-owners and slaves did not exist. And in those times there was no state, no special apparatus for the systematic application of force and the subjugation of people by force. It is such an apparatus that is called the state.

In primitive society, when people lived in small family groups and were still at the lowest stages of development, in a condition approximating to savagery—an epoch from which modern, civilised human society is separated by several thousand years—there were yet no signs of the existence of a state. We find the predominance of custom, authority, respect, the power enjoyed by the elders of the clan; we find this power sometimes accorded to women—the position of women then was not like the downtrodden and oppressed condition of women today—but nowhere do we find a special *category* of people set apart to rule others and who, for the sake and purpose of rule, systematically and permanently have at their disposal a certain apparatus of coercion, an apparatus of violence, such as is represented at the present time, as you all realise, by armed contingents of troops, prisons and other means of subjugating the will of others by force—all that which constitutes the essence of the state.

If we get away from what are known as religious teachings, from the subtleties, philosophical arguments and various opinions advanced by bourgeois scholars, if we get away from these and try to get at the real core of the matter, we shall find that the state really does amount to such an apparatus of rule which stands outside society as a whole. When there appears such a special group of men occupied solely with government, and who in order to rule need a special apparatus of coercion to subjugate the will of others by force—prisons, special contingents of men, armies, etc.—then there appears the state.

But there was a time when there was no state, when general ties, the community itself, discipline and the ordering of work were maintained by force of custom and tradition, by the authority or the respect enjoyed by the elders of the clan or by women—who in those times not only frequently enjoyed a status equal to that of men, but not infrequently enjoyed an even higher status—and when there was no special category of persons who were specialists in ruling. History shows that the state as a special apparatus for coercing people arose wherever and whenever there appeared a division of society into classes, that is, a division into groups of people some of which were permanently in a position to appropriate the labour of others, where some people exploited others.

And this division of society into classes must always be clearly borne in mind as a fundamental fact of history. The development of all human societies for thousands of years, in all countries without exception, reveals a general conformity to law, a regularity and consistency; so that at first we had a society without classes—the original patriarchal, primitive society, in which there were no aristocrats; then we had a society based on slavery—a slave-owning society. The whole of modern, civilised Europe has passed through this stage—slavery ruled supreme two thousand years ago. The vast majority of peoples of the other parts of the world also passed through this stage. Traces of slavery survive to this day among the less developed peoples; you will find the institution of slavery in Africa, for example, at the present time. The division into slave-owners and slaves was the first important class division. The former group not only owned all the means of production—the land and the implements, however poor and primitive they may have been in those times—but also owned people. This group was known as slave-owners, while those who laboured and supplied labour for others were known as slaves.

This form was followed in history by another—feudalism. In the great majority of countries slavery in the course of its development evolved into serfdom. The fundamental division of society was now into feudal lords and peasant serfs. The form of

relations between people changed. The slave-owners had regarded the slaves as their property; the law had confirmed this view and regarded the slave as a chattel completely owned by the slave-owner. As far as the peasant serf was concerned, class oppression and dependence remained, but it was not considered that the feudal lord owned the peasants as chattels, but that he was only entitled to their labour, to the obligatory performance of certain services. In practice, as you know, serfdom, especially in Russia where it survived longest of all and assumed the crudest forms, in no way differed from slavery.

Further, with the development of trade, the appearance of the world market and the development of money circulation, a new class arose within feudal society—the capitalist class. From the commodity, the exchange of commodities and the rise of the power of money, there derived the power of capital. During the eighteenth century, or rather, from the end of the eighteenth century and during the nineteenth century, revolutions took place all over the world. Feudalism was abolished in all the countries of Western Europe. Russia was the last country in which this took place. In 1861 a radical change took place in Russia as well; as a consequence of this one form of society was replaced by another—feudalism was replaced by capitalism, under which division into classes remained, as well as various traces and remnants of serfdom, but fundamentally the division into classes assumed a different form.

The owners of capital, the owners of the land and the owners of the factories in all capitalist countries constituted and still constitute an insignificant minority of the population who have complete command of the labour of the whole people, and, consequently, command, oppress and exploit the whole mass of labourers, the majority of whom are proletarians, wage-workers, who procure their livelihood in the process of production only by the sale of their own worker's hands, their labour-power. With the transition to capitalism, the peasants, who had been disunited and downtrodden in feudal times, were converted partly (the majority) into proletarians, and partly (the minority) into wealthy peasants who themselves hired labourers and who constituted a rural bourgeoisie.

This fundamental fact—the transition of society from primitive forms of slavery to serfdom and finally to capitalism—you must always bear in mind, for only by remembering this fundamental fact, only by examining all political doctrines placed in this fundamental scheme, will you be able properly to appraise these doctrines and understand what they refer to: for each of these great periods in the history of mankind, slave-owning, feudal and capitalist, embraces scores and hundreds of centuries and presents



such a mass of political forms, such a variety of political doctrines, opinions and revolutions, that this extreme diversity and immense variety (especially in connection with the political, philosophical and other doctrines of bourgeois scholars and politicians) can be understood only by firmly holding, as to a guiding thread, to this division of society into classes, this change in the forms of class rule, and from this standpoint examining all social questions—economic, political, spiritual, religious, etc.

If you examine the state from the standpoint of this fundamental division, you will find that before the division of society into classes, as I have already said, no state existed. But as the social division into classes arose and took firm root, as class society arose, the state also arose and took firm root. The history of mankind knows scores and hundreds of countries that have passed or are still passing through slavery, feudalism and capitalism. In each of these countries, despite the immense historical changes that have taken place, despite all the political vicissitudes and all the revolutions due to this development of mankind, to the transition from slavery through feudalism to capitalism and to the present world-wide struggle against capitalism, you will always discern the emergence of the state. It has always been a certain apparatus which stood outside society and consisted of a group of people engaged solely, or almost solely, or mainly, in ruling. People are divided into the ruled, and into specialists in ruling, those who rise above society and are called rulers, statesmen. This apparatus, this group of people who rule others, always possesses certain means of coercion, of physical force, irrespective of whether this violence over people is expressed in the primitive club, or in more perfected types of weapons in the epoch of slavery, or in the fire-arms which appeared in the Middle Ages, or, finally, in modern weapons, which in the twentieth century are technical marvels and are based entirely on the latest achievements of modern technology. The methods of violence changed, but whenever there was a state there existed in every society a group of persons who ruled, who commanded, who dominated and who in order to maintain their power possessed an apparatus of physical coercion, an apparatus of violence, with those weapons which corresponded to the technical level of the given epoch. And by examining these general phenomena, by asking ourselves why no state existed when there were no classes, when there were no exploiters and exploited, and why it appeared when classes appeared—only in this way shall we find a definite answer to the question of what is the nature and significance of the state.

The state is a machine for maintaining the rule of one class over another. When there were no classes in society, when, before the epoch of slavery, people laboured in primitive conditions of

greater equality, in conditions when the productivity of labour was still at its lowest, and when primitive man could barely procure the wherewithal for the crudest and most primitive existence, a special group of people whose function is to rule and to dominate the rest of society, had not and could not yet have emerged. Only when the first form of the division of society into classes appeared, only when slavery appeared, when a certain class of people, by concentrating on the crudest forms of agricultural labour, could produce a certain surplus, when this surplus was not absolutely essential for the most wretched existence of the slave and passed into the hands of the slave-owner, when in this way the existence of this class of slave-owners was secure—then in order that it might take firm root it was necessary for a state to appear.

And it did appear—the slave-owning state, an apparatus which gave the slave-owners power and enabled them to rule over the slaves. Both society and the state were then on a much smaller scale than they are now, they possessed incomparably poorer means of communication—the modern means of communication did not then exist. Mountains, rivers and seas were immeasurably greater obstacles than they are now, and the state took shape within far narrower geographical boundaries. A technically weak state apparatus served a state confined within relatively narrow boundaries and with a narrow range of action. Nevertheless, there did exist an apparatus which compelled the slaves to remain in slavery, which kept one part of society subjugated to and oppressed by another. It is impossible to compel the greater part of society to work systematically for the other part of society without a permanent apparatus of coercion. So long as there were no classes, there was no apparatus of this sort. When classes appeared, everywhere and always, as the division grew and took firmer hold, there also appeared a special institution—the state. The forms of state were extremely varied. As early as the period of slavery we find diverse forms of the state in the countries that were the most advanced, cultured and civilised according to the standards of the time—for example, in ancient Greece and Rome—which were based entirely on slavery. At that time there was already a difference between monarchy and republic, between aristocracy and democracy. A monarchy is the power of a single person, a republic is the absence of any nonelected authority; an aristocracy is the power of a relatively small minority, a democracy is the power of the people (democracy in Greek literally means the power of the people). All these differences arose in the epoch of slavery. Despite these differences, the state of the slave-owning epoch was a slave-owning state, irrespective of whether it was a monarchy or a republic, aristocratic or democratic.

In every course on the history of ancient times, in any lecture on this subject, you will hear about the struggle which was waged between the monarchical and republican states. But the fundamental fact is that the slaves were not regarded as human beings—not only were they not regarded as citizens, they were not even regarded as human beings. Roman law regarded them as chattels. The law of manslaughter, not to mention the other laws for the protection of the person, did not extend to slaves. It defended only the slave-owners, who were alone recognised as citizens with full rights. But whether a monarchy was instituted or a republic, it was a monarchy of the slave-owners or a republic of the slave-owners. All rights were enjoyed by the slave-owners, while the slave was a chattel in the eyes of the law; and not only could any sort of violence be perpetrated against a slave, but even the killing of a slave was not considered a crime. Slave-owning republics differed in their internal organisation, there were aristocratic republics and democratic republics. In an aristocratic republic only a small number of privileged persons took part in the elections; in a democratic republic everybody took part—but everybody meant only the slave-owners, that is, everybody except the slaves. This fundamental fact must be borne in mind, because it throws more light than any other on the question of the state and clearly demonstrates the nature of the state.

The state is a machine for the oppression of one class by another, a machine for holding in obedience to one class other, subordinated classes. There are various forms of this machine. The slave-owning state could be a monarchy, an aristocratic republic or even a democratic republic. In fact the forms of government varied extremely, but their essence was always the same: the slaves enjoyed no rights and constituted an oppressed class; they were not regarded as human beings. We find the same thing in the feudal state.

The change in the form of exploitation transformed the slave-owning state into the feudal state. This was of immense importance. In slave-owning society the slave enjoyed no rights whatever and was not regarded as a human being; in feudal society the peasant was bound to the soil. The chief distinguishing feature of serfdom was that the peasants (and at that time the peasants constituted the majority; the urban population was still very small) were considered bound to the land—this is the very basis of "serfdom". The peasant might work a definite number of days for himself on the plot assigned to him by the landlord; on the other days the peasant serf worked for his lord. The essence of class society remained—society was based on class exploitation. Only the owners of the land could enjoy rights; the peasants had no rights at all. In practice their condition differed very

little from the condition of slaves in the slave-owning state. Nevertheless, a wider road was opened for their emancipation, for the emancipation of the peasants, since the peasant serf was not regarded as the direct property of the lord. He could work part of his time on his own plot, could, so to speak, belong to himself to some extent; and with the wider opportunities for the development of exchange and trade relations the feudal system steadily disintegrated and the scope of emancipation of the peasantry steadily widened. Feudal society was always more complex than slave society. There was a greater development of trade and industry, which even in those days led to capitalism. In the Middle Ages feudalism predominated. And here too the forms of state varied, here too we find both the monarchy and the republic, although the latter was much more weakly expressed. But always the feudal lord was regarded as the only ruler. The peasant serfs were deprived of absolutely all political rights.

Neither under slavery nor under the feudal system could a small minority of people dominate over the vast majority without coercion. History is full of the constant attempts of the oppressed classes to throw off oppression. The history of slavery contains records of wars of emancipation from slavery which lasted for decades. Incidentally, the name "Spartacist" now adopted by the German Communists—the only German party which is really fighting against the yoke of capitalism—was adopted by them because Spartacus was one of the most prominent heroes of one of the greatest revolts of slaves, which took place about two thousand years ago. For many years the seemingly omnipotent Roman Empire, which rested entirely on slavery, experienced the shocks and blows of a widespread uprising of slaves who armed and united to form a vast army under the leadership of Spartacus. In the end they were defeated, captured and put to torture by the slave-owners. Such civil wars mark the whole history of the existence of class society. I have just mentioned an example of the greatest of these civil wars in the epoch of slavery. The whole epoch of feudalism is likewise marked by constant uprisings of the peasants. For example, in Germany in the Middle Ages the struggle between the two classes—the landlords and the serfs—assumed wide proportions and was transformed into a civil war of the peasants against the landowners. You are all familiar with similar examples of repeated uprisings of the peasants against the feudal landowners in Russia.

In order to maintain their rule and to preserve their power, the feudal lords had to have an apparatus by which they could unite under their subjugation a vast number of people and subordinate them to certain laws and regulations; and all these laws

fundamentally amounted to one thing—the maintenance of the power of the lords over the peasant serfs. And this was the feudal state, which in Russia, for example, or in quite backward Asiatic countries (where feudalism prevails to this day) differed in form—it was either a republic or a monarchy. When the state was a monarchy, the rule of one person was recognised; when it was a republic, the participation of the elected representatives of landowning society was in one degree or another recognised—this was in feudal society. Feudal society represented a division of classes under which the vast majority—the peasant serfs—were completely subjected to an insignificant minority—the owners of the land.

The development of trade, the development of commodity exchange, led to the emergence of a new class—the capitalists. Capital took shape as such at the close of the Middle Ages, when, after the discovery of America, world trade developed enormously when the quantity of precious metals increased, when silver and gold became the medium of exchange, when money circulation made it possible for individuals to possess tremendous wealth. Silver and gold were recognised as wealth all over the world. The economic power of the landowning class declined and the power of the new class—the representatives of capital—developed. The reconstruction of society was such that all citizens seemed to be equal, the old division into slave-owners and slaves disappeared, all were regarded as equal before the law irrespective of what capital each owned; whether he owned land as private property, or was a poor man who owned nothing but his labour-power—all were equal before the law. The law protects everybody equally: it protects the property of those who have it from attack by the masses who, possessing no property, possessing nothing but their labour-power, grow steadily impoverished and ruined and become converted into proletarians. Such is capitalist society.

I cannot dwell on it in detail. You will return to this when you come to discuss the Programme of the Party—you will then hear a description of capitalist society. This society advanced against serfdom, against the old feudal system, under the slogan of liberty. But it was liberty for those who owned property. And when feudalism was shattered, which occurred at the end of the eighteenth century and the beginning of the nineteenth century—in Russia it occurred later than in other countries, in 1861—the feudal state was then superseded by the capitalist state, which proclaims liberty for the whole people as its slogan, which declares that it expresses the will of the whole people and denies that it is a class state. And here there developed a struggle between the socialists, who are fighting for the liberty of the whole people, and the capitalist state—a struggle which has led to the creation

of the Soviet Socialist Republic and which is going on throughout the world.

To understand the struggle that has been started against world capital, to understand the nature of the capitalist state, we must remember that when the capitalist state advanced against the feudal state it entered the fight under the slogan of liberty. The abolition of feudalism meant liberty for the representatives of the capitalist state and served their purpose, inasmuch as serfdom was breaking down and the peasants had acquired the opportunity of owning as their full property the land which they had purchased for compensation or in part by quit-rent—this did not concern the state: it protected property irrespective of its origin, because the state was founded on private property. The peasants became private owners in all the modern, civilised states. Even when the landowner surrendered part of his land to the peasant, the state protected private property, rewarding the landowner by compensation, by letting him take money for the land. The state as it were declared that it would fully preserve private property, and it accorded it every support and protection. The state recognised the property rights of every merchant, industrialist and manufacturer. And this society, based on private property, on the power of capital, on the complete subjection of the propertyless workers and labouring masses of the peasantry, proclaimed that its rule was based on liberty. Combating feudalism, it proclaimed freedom of property and was particularly proud of the fact that the state had ceased, supposedly, to be a class state.

Yet the state continued to be a machine which helped the capitalists to hold the poor peasants and the working class in subjection. But in outward appearance it was free. It proclaimed universal suffrage, and declared through its champions, preachers, scholars and philosophers, that it was not a class state. Even now, when the Soviet Socialist Republics have begun to fight the state, they accuse us of violating liberty, of building a state based on coercion, on the suppression of some by others, whereas they represent a popular, democratic state. And now, when the world socialist revolution has begun, and when the revolution has succeeded in some countries, when the fight against world capital has grown particularly acute, this question of the state has acquired the greatest importance and has become, one might say, the most burning one, the focus of all present-day political questions and political disputes.

Whichever party we take in Russia or in any of the more civilised countries, we find that nearly all political disputes, disagreements and opinions now centre around the conception of the state. Is the state in a capitalist country, in a democratic republic—espe-

cially one like Switzerland or the U.S.A.—in the freest democratic republics, an expression of the popular will, the sum total of the general decision of the people, the expression of the national will, and so forth; or is the state a machine that enables the capitalists of those countries to maintain their power over the working class and the peasantry? That is the fundamental question around which all political disputes all over the world now centre. What do they say about Bolshevism? The bourgeois press abuses the Bolsheviks. You will not find a single newspaper that does not repeat the hackneyed accusation that the Bolsheviks violate popular rule. If our Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries in their simplicity of heart (perhaps it is not simplicity, or perhaps it is the simplicity which the proverb says is worse than robbery) think that they discovered and invented the accusation that the Bolsheviks had violated liberty and popular rule, they are ludicrously mistaken. Today every one of the richest newspapers in the richest countries, which spend tens of millions on their distribution and disseminate bourgeois lies and imperialist policy in tens of millions of copies—every one of these newspapers repeats these basic arguments and accusations against Bolshevism, namely, that the U.S.A., Britain and Switzerland are advanced states based on popular rule, whereas the Bolshevik republic is a state of bandits in which liberty is unknown, and that the Bolsheviks have violated the idea of popular rule and have even gone so far as to disperse the Constituent Assembly. These terrible accusations against the Bolsheviks are repeated all over the world. These accusations lead us directly to the question—what is the state? In order to understand these accusations, in order to study them and have a fully intelligent attitude towards them, and not to examine them on hearsay but with a firm opinion of our own, we must have a clear idea of what the state is. We have before us capitalist states of every kind and all the theories in defence of them which were created before the war. In order to answer the question properly we must critically examine all these theories and views.

I have already advised you to turn for help to Engels's book *The Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State*. This book says that every state in which private ownership of the land and means of production exists, in which capital dominates, however democratic it may be, is a capitalist state, a machine used by the capitalists to keep the working class and the poor peasants in subjection; while universal suffrage, a Constituent Assembly, a parliament are merely a form, a sort of promissory note, which does not change the real state of affairs.

The forms of domination of the state may vary: capital manifests its power in one way where one form exists, and in another

way where another form exists—but essentially the power is in the hands of capital, whether there are voting qualifications or some other rights or not, or whether the republic is a democratic one or not—in fact, the more democratic it is the cruder and more cynical is the rule of capitalism. One of the most democratic republics in the world is the United States of America, yet nowhere (and those who have been there since 1905 probably know it) is the power of capital, the power of a handful of multimillionaires over the whole of society, so crude and so openly corrupt as in America. Once capital exists, it dominates the whole of society, and no democratic republic, no franchise can change its nature.

The democratic republic and universal suffrage were an immense progressive advance as compared with feudalism: they have enabled the proletariat to achieve its present unity and solidarity, to form those firm and disciplined ranks which are waging a systematic struggle against capital. There was nothing even approximately resembling this among the peasant serfs, not to speak of the slaves. The slaves, as we know, revolted, rioted, started civil wars, but they could never create a class-conscious majority and parties to lead the struggle, they could not clearly realise what their aims were, and even in the most revolutionary moments of history they were always pawns in the hands of the ruling classes. The bourgeois republic, parliament, universal suffrage—all represent great progress from the standpoint of the world development of society. Mankind moved towards capitalism, and it was capitalism alone which, thanks to urban culture, enabled the oppressed proletarian class to become conscious of itself and to create the world working-class movement, the millions of workers organised all over the world in parties—the socialist parties which are consciously leading the struggle of the masses. Without parliamentarism, without an electoral system, this development of the working class would have been impossible. That is why all these things have acquired such great importance in the eyes of the broad masses of people. That is why a radical change seems to be so difficult. It is not only the conscious hypocrites, scientists and priests that uphold and defend the bourgeois lie that the state is free and that it is its mission to defend the interests of all; so also do a large number of people who sincerely adhere to the old prejudices and who cannot understand the transition from the old, capitalist society to socialism. Not only people who are directly dependent on the bourgeoisie, not only those who live under the yoke of capital or who have been bribed by capital (there are a large number of all sorts of scientists, artists, priests, etc., in the service of capital), but even people who are simply under the sway of the prejudice of bourgeois liberty, have taken up arms against Bol-



shevism all over the world because when the Soviet Republic was founded it rejected these bourgeois lies and openly declared: you say your state is free, whereas in reality, as long as there is private property, your state, even if it is a democratic republic, is nothing but a machine used by the capitalists to suppress the workers, and the freer the state, the more clearly is this expressed. Examples of this are Switzerland in Europe and the United States in America. Nowhere does capital rule so cynically and ruthlessly, and nowhere is it so clearly apparent, as in these countries, although they are democratic republics, no matter how prettily they are painted and notwithstanding all the talk about labour democracy and the equality of all citizens. The fact is that in Switzerland and the United States capital dominates, and every attempt of the workers to achieve the slightest real improvement in their condition is immediately met by civil war. There are fewer soldiers, a smaller standing army, in these countries—Switzerland has a militia and every Swiss has a gun at home, while in America there was no standing army until quite recently—and so when there is a strike the bourgeoisie arms, hires soldiery and suppresses the strike; and nowhere is this suppression of the working-class movement accompanied by such ruthless severity as in Switzerland and the U.S.A., and nowhere does the influence of capital in parliament manifest itself as powerfully as in these countries. The power of capital is everything, the stock exchange is everything, while parliament and elections are marionettes, puppets. . . . But the eyes of the workers are being opened more and more, and the idea of Soviet government is spreading farther and farther afield, especially after the bloody carnage we have just experienced. The necessity for a relentless war on the capitalists is becoming clearer and clearer to the working class.

Whatever guise a republic may assume, however democratic it may be, if it is a bourgeois republic, if it retains private ownership of the land and factories, and if private capital keeps the whole of society in wage-slavery, that is, if the republic does not carry out what is proclaimed in the Programme of our Party and in the Soviet Constitution, then this state is a machine for the suppression of some people by others. And we shall place this machine in the hands of the class that is to overthrow the power of capital. We shall reject all the old prejudices about the state meaning universal equality—for that is a fraud: as long as there is exploitation there cannot be equality. The landowner cannot be the equal of the worker, or the hungry man the equal of the full man. This machine called the state, before which people bowed in superstitious awe, believing the old tales that it means popular rule, tales which the proletariat declares to

be a bourgeois lie—this machine the proletariat will smash. So far we have deprived the capitalists of this machine and have taken it over. We shall use this machine, or bludgeon, to destroy all exploitation. And when the possibility of exploitation no longer exists anywhere in the world, when there are no longer owners of land and owners of factories, and when there is no longer a situation in which some gorge while others starve, only when the possibility of this no longer exists shall we consign this machine to the scrap-heap. Then there will be no state and no exploitation. Such is the view of our Communist Party. I hope that we shall return to this subject in subsequent lectures, return to it again and again.

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## LETTER TO THE WORKERS AND PEASANTS APROPOS OF THE VICTORY OVER KOLCHAK

Comrades, Red troops have liberated the entire Urals area from Kolchak and have begun the liberation of Siberia. The workers and peasants of the Urals and Siberia are enthusiastically welcoming Soviet power, for it is sweeping away with an iron broom all the landowner and capitalist scum who ground down the people with exactions, humiliations, floggings, and the restoration of tsarist oppression.

Although we all rejoice at the liberation of the Urals and the entry of the Red troops into Siberia we must not allow ourselves to be lulled into a sense of security. The enemy is still far from being destroyed. He has not even been definitely broken.

Every effort must be made to drive Kolchak and the Japanese and other foreign bandits out of Siberia, and an even greater effort is needed to destroy the enemy, to prevent him from starting his banditry again and again.

How is that to be achieved?

The harrowing experience of the Urals and Siberia, as well as the experience of all countries which have been through the torments of the four years of imperialist war, must not be without its lessons for us.

*Here are the five chief lessons* which all workers and peasants, all working people, must draw from this experience so as to ensure themselves against a repetition of the calamities of the Kolchak rule.

*First lesson.* In order to defend the power of the workers and peasants from the bandits, that is, from the land-owners and capitalists, we need a powerful Red Army. We have proved—not by words but by actual deeds—that we are capable of creating it, that we have learned to direct it and to defeat the capitalists notwithstanding the lavish assistance in arms and equipment they are receiving from the richest countries in the world. That much the Bolsheviks have proved by actual deeds. All workers and peasants—if they are class-conscious—must place their faith

in them, not on the strength of their word (for to believe a man on the strength of his word is foolish), but on the strength of the experience of millions upon millions of people in the Urals and Siberia. It is a most difficult problem to combine two elements—arming the workers and peasants and giving the command to ex-officers, who for the most part sympathise with the landowners and capitalists. It can be solved only given splendid organising ability, strict and conscious discipline, and the confidence of the broad masses in the guiding force, the worker commissars. This most difficult problem the Bolsheviks have solved; cases of treachery on the part of ex-officers are very numerous, nevertheless the Red Army is not only in our hands, but has learned to defeat the generals of the tsar and the generals of Britain, France, and America.

Consequently, everyone who seriously wishes to rid himself of the rule of Kolchak must devote all his energies, means and ability without reservation to the task of building up and strengthening the Red Army. Obey all the laws on the Red Army and all orders conscientiously and scrupulously, support discipline in it in every way, and help the Red Army, each to the best of his ability—such is the prime, fundamental, and principal duty of every class-conscious worker and peasant who does not want the rule of Kolchak.

Fear like the plague the unruly guerrilla spirit, the arbitrary actions of isolated detachments and disobedience to the central authorities, for it spells doom as the Urals, Siberia, and the Ukraine have demonstrated.

He who does not unreservedly and selflessly assist the Red Army, or support order and discipline in it with all his might, is a traitor and treason-monger, a supporter of the rule of Kolchak, and should be shown no mercy.

With a strong Red Army we shall be invincible. Without a strong army we shall inevitably fall victim to Kolchak, Denikin, and Yudenich.

*Second lesson.* The Red Army cannot be strong without large state stocks of grain, for without them it is impossible to move an army freely or to train it properly. Without them we cannot maintain the workers who are producing for the army.

Every class-conscious worker and peasant must know and remember that the chief reason now that our Red Army successes are not swift and stable enough is precisely the shortage of state stocks of grain. He who does not give his surpluses of grain to the state is helping Kolchak, he is a traitor and betrayer of the workers and peasants and is responsible for the unnecessary death and suffering of tens of thousands of workers and peasants in the Red Army.

Rogues and profiteers and very ignorant peasants argue in this way—better sell my grain at the open market price, I will get far more for it than the fixed price paid by the state.

But the whole point is that free sale promotes profiteering; a few get rich, only the wealthy are sated, while the working masses go hungry. We saw that in practice in the richest grain-bearing districts of Siberia and the Ukraine.

With the free sale of grain capital triumphs, while labour starves and suffers.

With the free sale of grain the price rises to thousands of rubles per pood, money loses its value, a handful of profiteers benefit while the people grow poorer.

With the free sale of grain the government granaries are empty. the army is powerless, industry dies, and the victory of Kolchak and Denikin is inevitable.

Only the rich, only the worst enemies of the workers' and peasants' government are consciously in favour of the free sale of grain. Those who out of ignorance are in favour of the free sale of grain should learn to understand from the example of Siberia and the Ukraine why it means victory for Kolchak and Denikin.

There are still unenlightened peasants who argue as follows: let the state first give me in exchange for my grain good wares at pre-war prices, then I will give up my surplus grain, otherwise I will not. And by this sort of argument the rogues and supporters of the landowners often hoodwink the unenlightened peasants.

It should not be difficult to understand that the workers' state which the capitalists completely devastated by four years of a predatory war for the sake of Constantinople, and which the Kolchaks and Denikins are now devastating again by way of revenge with the help of the capitalists of the whole world—it should not be difficult to understand that such a state cannot at this moment supply the peasants with goods, for industry is at a standstill. There is no food, no fuel, no industry.

Every sensible peasant will agree that the surplus grain must be given to the starving worker as a loan on condition of receiving industrial goods in return.

That is the way it is now. All class-conscious and sensible peasants, all except the rogues and profiteers will agree that *all surplus grain without exception* must be turned over to the workers' state as a loan, because then the state will restore industry and supply industrial goods to the peasants.

But, we may be asked, will the peasants trust the workers' state sufficiently to loan their surplus grain to it?

Our reply is that first, the state gives a bond for the loan in the shape of treasury notes. Secondly, all peasants know by

experience that the workers' state, that is, Soviet power, helps the working people and fights the landowners and capitalists. That is why Soviet power is called workers' and peasants' power. Thirdly, the peasants have no other alternative—either they trust the worker or they trust the capitalist; they give their confidence and a loan either to the workers' state or to the capitalist state. There is no other alternative either in Russia or in any country in the world. The more class-conscious the peasants become, the more firmly they stand by the workers and the more resolute they are in their decision to help the workers' state in every way so as to make the return of the power of the landowners and capitalists impossible.

*Third lesson.* If Kolchak and Denikin are to be completely destroyed the strictest revolutionary order must be maintained, the laws and instructions of the Soviet government must be faithfully observed, and care must be taken that they are obeyed by all.

Kolchak's victories in Siberia and the Urals have been a clear example to all of us that the least disorder, the slightest inringement of Soviet laws, the slightest laxity or negligence at once serve to strengthen the landowners and capitalists and make for their victory. For the landowners and capitalists have not been destroyed and do not consider themselves vanquished; every intelligent worker and peasant sees, knows, and realises that they have only been beaten and have gone into hiding, are lying low, very often disguising themselves by a "Soviet" "protective" colouring. Many landowners have wormed their way into state farms, and capitalists into various "chief administrations" and "central boards", acting the part of Soviet officials; they are watching every step of the Soviet government, waiting for it to make a mistake or show weakness, so as to overthrow it, to help the Czechoslovaks today and Denikin tomorrow.

Everything must be done to track down these bandits, these landowners and capitalists who are lying low, and to ferret them out, *no matter what guise they take*, to expose them and punish them ruthlessly, for they are the worst foes of the working people, skilful, shrewd, and experienced enemies who are patiently waiting for an opportune moment to set a conspiracy going; they are saboteurs, who stop at no crime to injure Soviet power. We must be merciless towards these enemies of the working people, towards the landowners, capitalists, saboteurs, and counter-revolutionaries.

And in order to be able to catch them we must be skilful, careful, and class-conscious, we must watch out most attentively for the least disorder, for the slightest deviation from the conscientious observance of the laws of the Soviet government. The

landowners and capitalists are strong not only because of their knowledge and experience and the assistance they get from the richest countries in the world, but also because of the force of habit and the ignorance of the broad masses who want to live in the "good old way" and do not realise how essential it is that Soviet laws be strictly and conscientiously observed.

The slightest lawlessness, the slightest infraction of Soviet law and order is a *loophole* the foes of the working people take immediate advantage of, it is a *starting-point* for Kolchak and Denikin victories. It would be criminal to forget that the Kolchak movement began through some slight lack of caution in respect of the Czechoslovaks, with insignificant insubordination on the part of certain regiments.

*Fourth lesson.* It is criminal to forget not only that the Kolchak movement began with trifles but also that the Mensheviks ("Social-Democrats") and S.R.s ("Socialist-Revolutionaries") assisted its birth and directly supported it. It is time we learned to judge political parties not by their words, but by their deeds.

The Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries call themselves socialists, but they are actually *abettors of the counter-revolutionaries*, abettors of the landowners and capitalists. This was proved in practice not only by isolated facts, but by two big periods in the history of the Russian revolution: (1) the Kerensky period, and (2) the Kolchak period. Both times the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries, while professing to be "socialists" and "democrats", actually played the role of *abettors of the whiteguards*. Are we then going to be so foolish as to believe them now they are suggesting we let them "try again", and call our permission a "united socialist (or democratic) front"? Since the Kolchak experience, can there still be peasants other than few isolated individuals, who do not realise that a "united front" with the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries means union with the abettors of Kolchak?

It may be objected that the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries have realised their mistake and renounced all alliance with the bourgeoisie. But that is not true. In the first place, the Right Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries have not renounced such an alliance, and there is *no* definite line of demarcation from these "Rights". There is no such line through the fault of the "Left" Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries: for although they verbally "condemn" their "Rights", even the best of the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries, in spite of all they say, are actually *powerless* compared with them. Secondly, what even the best of the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries advocate are actually *Kolchak* ideas which assist the bourgeoisie and Kolchak and Denikin and help to mask their

filthy and bloody capitalist deeds. These ideas are: a people's government, universal, equal, and direct suffrage, a constituent assembly, freedom of the press, and the like. All over the world we see capitalist republics which justify capitalist rule and wars for the enslavement of colonies precisely by this lie of "democracy". In our own country we see that Kolchak, Denikin, Yudenich or any other general readily hands out such "democratic" promises. Can we trust a man who on the strength of verbal promises helps a known bandit? The Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries, all without exception, help known bandits, the world imperialists, using pseudo-democratic slogans to paint *their* state power, *their* campaign against Russia, *their* rule and *their* policy in bright colours. All the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries offer us an "alliance" on condition that we make concessions to the capitalists and their leaders, Kolchak and Denikin; as, for example, that we "renounce terror" (when we are faced with the terror of the multimillionaires of the whole Entente, of the whole alliance of the richest countries, that are engineering plots in Russia), or that we open the way for freedom to trade in grain, and so on. What these "conditions" of the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries boil down to is this: we, the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries, are wavering towards the capitalists, and we want a "united front" with the Bolsheviks, against whom the capitalists taking advantage of every concession are fighting! No, my Menshevik and Socialist-Revolutionary gentlemen, look no more in Russia for people capable of believing you. In Russia class-conscious workers and peasants now realise that the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries are abettors of the whiteguards—some deliberate and malicious, others unwitting and because of their persistence in their old mistakes, but abettors of the whiteguards nevertheless.

*Fifth lesson.* If Kolchak and his rule are to be destroyed and not allowed to recur, all peasants must unhesitatingly make their choice in favour of the workers' state. Some people (especially the Mensheviks and the Socialist-Revolutionaries—all of them, even the "Lefts" among them) are trying to scare the peasants with the bogey of the "dictatorship of one party", the Party of Bolsheviks, Communists.

The peasants have learned from the Kolchak regime not to be afraid of this bogey.

Either the dictatorship (i.e., the iron rule) of the landowners and capitalists, or the dictatorship of the working class.

There is no middle course. The scions of the aristocracy, intellectualists and petty gentry, badly educated on bad books, dream of a middle course. There is no middle course anywhere in the world, nor can there be. Either the dictatorship of the



bourgeoisie (masked by ornate Socialist-Revolutionary and Menshevik phraseology about a people's government, a constituent assembly, liberties, and the like), or the dictatorship of the proletariat. He who has not learned this from the whole history of the nineteenth century is a hopeless idiot. And we in Russia have all seen how the Mensheviks and the Socialist-Revolutionaries dreamed of a middle course under Kerensky and under Kolchak.

To whom did these dreams do service? Whom did they assist? Kolchak and Denikin. Those who dream of a middle course are abettors of Kolchak.

In the Urals and Siberia the workers and peasants had an opportunity of comparing the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie with the dictatorship of the working class. The dictatorship of the working class is being implemented by the Bolshevik Party, the party which as far back as 1905 and even earlier merged with the entire revolutionary proletariat.

Dictatorship of the working class means that the workers' state will unhesitatingly suppress the landowners and capitalists and the renegades and traitors who help these exploiters, and will defeat them.

The workers' state is an implacable enemy of the landowner and capitalist, of the profiteer and swindler, an enemy of the private ownership of land and capital, an enemy of the power of money.

The workers' state is the only loyal friend and helper the working people and the peasantry have. No leaning towards capital but an alliance of the working people to fight it, *workers' and peasants' power, Soviet power*—that is what the "dictatorship of the working class" means *in practice*.

The Mensheviks and the Socialist-Revolutionaries want to scare the peasants with these words. They won't succeed. After Kolchak, the workers and peasants even in the most remote backwoods realise that these words mean *precisely that without which there can be no salvation from Kolchak*.

Down with the waverers, with the spineless people who are erring in the direction of helping capital and have been captivated by the slogans and promises of capital! An implacable fight against capital, and an alliance of the working people, an alliance of the peasants and the working class—that is the last and most important lesson of the Kolchak regime

August 24, 1919

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## THE EXAMPLE OF THE PETROGRAD WORKERS

The newspapers have already reported that the Petrograd workers have begun the intensive mobilisation and dispatch of the best workers to the Southern Front.

Denikin's capture of Kursk and advance on Orel fully explain this energetic action of the Petrograd proletariat, whose example must be followed by the workers of other industrial centres.

The Denikin gang count on sowing panic in our ranks and making us think only of defence, only of the matter in hand. The foreign radio shows how zealously the French and British imperialists are helping Denikin, how they are helping him with armaments and hundreds of millions of rubles. The foreign radio proclaims to the whole world that the road to Moscow lies open. That is how the capitalists would like to frighten us.

But they will not succeed in frightening us. The deployment of our troops has been carefully planned and strictly carried out. Our offensive against the chief source of the enemy's strength steadily continues. The victories recently won—the capture of 20 guns in the Boguchar area, the capture of the village of Veshenskaya—indicate the successful advance of our troops to the centre of the Cossack area, which alone enabled and still enables Denikin to organise a serious force. Denikin will be smashed as Kolchak has been smashed. They cannot frighten us and we shall bring our cause to a victorious conclusion.

The capture of Kursk and the enemy's advance on Orel required the provision of additional forces in order to repel him there. By their example the Petrograd workers have shown that they have correctly understood this task. Without hiding the dangers from ourselves, and without in any way minimising them, we say: Petrograd has shown that we do have additional forces. In order to repel the attack on Orel and to launch an offensive against Kursk and Kharkov, the best proletarians must be mobilised,

over and above the forces we already have at our disposal. The fall of Kursk constitutes a serious danger; never has the enemy been so near to Moscow. In addition to the previous army forces, we are dispatching new contingents of advanced workers capable of changing the mood of the retreating units to ward off this danger.

Among our troops in the South, deserters who have returned to the ranks occupy a prominent place. Most of them have returned voluntarily, under the influence of the propaganda which has explained where their duty lies and shown them how serious is the threat that the power of the landowners and capitalists will be restored. But the deserters do not hold out, they lack staunchness and quite often they begin to retreat without fighting.

That is why it is of prime importance to strengthen the army by a new influx of proletarian forces. The unstable elements will be given strength, morale will be raised, a turning-point will be reached. As has continually happened in our revolution, the proletariat will support and guide the wavering sections of the working population.

For a long time now the Petrograd workers have had to bear much greater burdens than the workers of other industrial centres. The Petrograd proletariat has suffered more than the proletariat in other localities from famine, the perils of war and the withdrawal of the best workers for Soviet duties throughout Russia.

Yet we see that there has not been the slightest dejection, not the slightest diminution of energy among the Petrograd workers. On the contrary, they have become steeled, they have found new strength and have brought new fighters to the fore. They are excellently fulfilling the duty of a leading contingent, sending aid and support where it is most needed.

When such fresh forces go to reinforce units of our army that have wavered, the mass of the working people, the soldiers of peasant origin obtain new leaders from among their own kind, from the more developed, more politically-conscious, and more staunch-minded working people. That is why such help to our peasant army gives us a decisive superiority over the enemy, for in his case it is only landowners' sons who are sent out to strengthen his peasant army, and we know that this "strengthening" has ruined Kolchak and will ruin Denikin.

Comrade workers! Let all of you set about the new work after the example of the Petrograd comrades! More energy for activities in the army, more initiative and boldness, more emulation so as to equal the Petrograders, and victory will be won by the working people, the landowner and capitalist counter-revolution will be beaten.

P.S. I have just learned that from Moscow also some dozens of the most devoted comrades have left for the front. Following Petrograd, Moscow has taken action. Following Moscow, all the rest should take action.

October 3, 1919

N.L.

*Pravda* No. 221, October 4, 1919

*Collected Works*, Vol. 30,  
pp. 47-49

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## RESULTS OF PARTY WEEK IN MOSCOW AND OUR TASKS

During Party Week in Moscow, 13,600 people were enrolled in the Party.

This is a huge, quite unexpected success. The entire bourgeoisie, and especially the urban petty bourgeoisie, including the specialists, officials and office workers who lament the loss of their privileged "ruling" position—all these gentlemen have recently, particularly during Party Week in Moscow, been doing their best to sow panic and to prophesy the imminent collapse of Soviet power and the imminent victory of Denikin.

And with what consummate artistry this "intellectualist" public wields the weapon of sowing panic! And it has indeed become a real weapon in the class struggle of the bourgeoisie against the proletariat. In periods such as the one we are passing through, the petty bourgeoisie merges in "one reactionary mass" with the bourgeoisie and "passionately" seizes on this weapon.

It is Moscow, where the trading element was especially strong, where there was a greater concentration of exploiters, landowners, capitalists and rentiers than anywhere else, where capitalist development brought together a mass of bourgeois intellectuals, where the central state administration produced an especially large body of officials—it is Moscow that has furnished an exceptionally convenient field for bourgeois tittle-tattle, bourgeois malicious talk and bourgeois panic-sowing. The successful offensive of Denikin and Yudenich was a "factor" that favoured to an extraordinary extent the "successes" of this bourgeois weapon.

And yet, when the mass of the proletarians saw Denikin's "successes" and realised all the difficulties, burdens and dangers attaching to the title and duties of a Communist at the present time, thousands and thousands of them rose up to reinforce the Party of Communists, to undertake the incredibly heavy burden of state administration.

The success of Soviet power, the success of our Party, is truly remarkable!

This success has proved and vividly demonstrated to the people of the capital, and then to the whole Republic and the whole world, that it is in the proletarian milieu, among the genuine representatives of the working people, that the most reliable source of the strength and durability of Soviet power is to be found. This successful voluntary enrolment in the Party at a time of maximum difficulty and danger is a real demonstration of *that aspect* of the dictatorship of the proletariat which its enemies, in their malice, refuse to see but which is valued above all by the real friends of the emancipation of labour from the capitalist yoke, namely, the special strength of the *moral* (in the best sense of the word) influence of the proletariat (which wields state power) on the masses, the *ways* this influence is exerted.

With state power in their hands, the foremost sections of the proletariat have by their example shown the mass of the working people, shown them throughout two whole years (in immense period for our exceptionally rapid tempo of political development), a *model* of such devotion to the interests of the working people, such vigour in the struggle against the enemies of the working people (against the exploiters in general and against "property-owners" and profiteers in particular), such firmness in difficult moments, such self-sacrificing resistance to the bandits of world imperialism, that the strength of the workers' and peasants' *sympathy* for their vanguard has proved by *itself* capable of *performing miracles*.

It is indeed a miracle. Workers, who have suffered unprecedented torments of hunger, cold, economic ruin and devastation, are not only maintaining their cheerful spirit, their entire devotion to Soviet power, all the energy of self-sacrifice and heroism, but also, despite their lack of training and experience, are undertaking the burden of steering the ship of state! And this at a moment when the storm has reached the peak of its fury. . . .

The history of our proletarian revolution is full of such miracles. They will lead, surely and inevitably, no matter what severe trials may be in store, to the full victory of the world Soviet republic.

We must take care now that *proper* use is made of the new Party members. Particularly great attention must be devoted to this task, for it is not an easy one; it is a new task and cannot be accomplished by old routines.

Capitalism stifled, suppressed and killed a wealth of talent among the workers and working peasants. These talents perished under the oppression of want, poverty and the outrage of human dignity. It is our duty now to bring out these talents and put

them to work. The new members who have joined the Party during Party Week are undoubtedly for the most part inexperienced and ignorant in matters of state administration. Equally undoubtedly these are most devoted, most sincere and capable people from the sections of society that capitalism artificially *held down*, reduced to the lowest level and did not allow to rise. Among them, however, there is *more* strength, vigour, staunchness, directness and sincerity than among other sections.

It follows that all Party organisations must give especial thought to the employment of these new Party members. They must be *more boldly* given the most varied kinds of state work, they must be tested in practice as rapidly as possible.

Boldness, of course, must not be taken to mean that the new members are to be entrusted *at once* with responsible posts requiring knowledge they do not possess. We must be bold in combating red tape: not for nothing has our Party Programme very definitely raised the question of the causes of a certain revival of bureaucratic methods and indicated methods of combating it. We must be bold in establishing, first of all, *supervision* over office workers, officials and specialists by new Party members who are well acquainted with the condition of the people, their needs and requirements. We must be bold in *immediately* affording these new members opportunities for developing and displaying their abilities in work *on a broad scale*. We must be bold in breaking with customary routine (among us too—quite often, alas!—there is an excessive fear of encroaching on established Soviet routine, although sometimes the “establishing” has been done not by class-conscious Communists, but by old officials and office workers); we must be bold in the sense that we must be prepared with revolutionary speed to alter the form of work for new Party members so as to test them more quickly and to find the appropriate place for them.

In many cases new Party members can be given posts where, in the course of checking up the conscientiousness with which old officials perform their tasks, these Party members will quickly learn the job themselves and be able to take it over independently. In other cases they can be placed so as to renovate and refresh the intermediary links between the mass of workers and peasants on the one hand, and the state apparatus on the other. In our industrial “chief administrations and central boards”, in our agricultural “state farms” there are still many, far too many, saboteurs, landowners and capitalists in hiding, who harm Soviet power in every way. Experienced Party workers in the centre and the localities should show their efficiency through *their* ability to make intensive use of the new Party forces for a determined fight against this evil.

The Soviet Republic must become a single armed camp where there is a maximum of effort, a maximum economy of forces, a maximum reduction of all red tape and unnecessary formalism and a maximum simplification of the apparatus which must be not only as close as possible to the needs of the masses, but also something they can readily understand and participate in independently.

Increased mobilisation of old Party members for army work is taking place. This activity must not be weakened in any way, but more and more intensified. At the same time, however, and with the aim of achieving success in the war, we must improve, simplify and revitalise our civil administration.

Victory in war goes to the side whose people has greater reserves, greater sources of strength and greater endurance.

We have more of all these qualities than the Whites, more than the "all-powerful" Anglo-French imperialism, this colossus with feet of clay. We have more of them because we can draw, and for a long time will continue to draw, more and more deeply upon the workers and working peasants, upon those classes which were oppressed by capitalism and which everywhere form the overwhelming majority of the population. We can draw from this most capacious reservoir, for it gives us leaders of the workers and peasants in the building of socialism who are the most sincere, the most steeled by the burdens of life, the closest to the workers and peasants.

Our enemies, whether the Russian or the world bourgeoisie, have nothing remotely resembling this reservoir; the ground is more and more giving way under their feet; they are being deserted by ever greater number of their former supporters among the workers and peasants.

That is why, in the last analysis, the victory of Soviet power throughout the world is certain and inevitable.

October 21, 1919

*Bulletin of the C.C., R.C.P.(B.)* No. 7.  
October 22, 1919  
Signed: *N. Lenin*

*Collected Works*, Vol. 30,  
pp. 71-75



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## ECONOMICS AND POLITICS IN THE ERA OF THE DICTATORSHIP OF THE PROLETARIAT

I intended to write a short pamphlet on the subject indicated in the title on the occasion of the second anniversary of Soviet power. But owing to the rush of everyday work I have so far been unable to get beyond preliminary preparations for some of the sections.\* I have therefore decided to essay a brief, summarised exposition of what, in my opinion, are the most essential ideas on the subject. A summarised exposition, of course, possesses many disadvantages and shortcomings. Nevertheless, a short magazine article may perhaps achieve the modest aim in view, which is to present the problem and the groundwork for its discussion by the Communists of various countries.

### 1

Theoretically, there can be no doubt that between capitalism and communism there lies a definite transition period which must combine the features and properties of both these forms of social economy. This transition period has to be a period of struggle between dying capitalism and nascent communism—or, in other words, between capitalism which has been defeated but not destroyed and communism which has been born but is still very feeble.

The necessity for a whole historical era distinguished by these transitional features should be obvious not only to Marxists, but to any educated person who is in any degree acquainted with the theory of development. Yet all the talk on the subject of the transition to socialism which we hear from present-day petty-bourgeois democrats (and such, in spite of their spurious socialist label, are all the leaders of the Second International, includ-

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\* See V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 30, pp. 93-104.—Ed.

ing such individuals as MacDonald, Jean Longuet, Kautsky and Friedrich Adler) is marked by complete disregard of this obvious truth. Petty-bourgeois democrats are distinguished by an aversion to class struggle, by their dreams of avoiding it, by their efforts to smooth over, to reconcile, to remove sharp corners. Such democrats, therefore, either avoid recognising any necessity for a whole historical period of transition from capitalism to communism or regard it as their duty to concoct schemes for reconciling the two contending forces instead of leading the struggle of one of these forces.

## 2

In Russia, the dictatorship of the proletariat must inevitably differ in certain particulars from what it would be in the advanced countries, owing to the very great backwardness and petty-bourgeois character of our country. But the basic forces—and the basic forms of social economy—are the same in Russia as in any capitalist country, so that the peculiarities can apply only to what is of lesser importance.

The basic forms of social economy are capitalism, petty commodity production, and communism. The basic forces are the bourgeoisie, the petty bourgeoisie (the peasantry in particular) and the proletariat.

The economic system of Russia in the era of the dictatorship of the proletariat represents the struggle of labour, united on communist principles on the scale of a vast state and making its first steps—the struggle against petty commodity production and against the capitalism which still persists and against that which is newly arising on the basis of petty commodity production.

In Russia, labour is united communistically insofar as, first, private ownership of the means of production has been abolished, and, secondly, the proletarian state power is organising large-scale production on state-owned land and in state-owned enterprises on a national scale, is distributing labour-power among the various branches of production and the various enterprises, and is distributing among the working people large quantities of articles of consumption belonging to the state.

We speak of “the first steps” of communism in Russia (it is also put that way in our Party Programme adopted in March 1919), because all these things have been only partially effected in our country, or, to put it differently, their achievement is only in its early stages. We accomplished instantly, at one revolutionary blow, all that can, in general, be accomplished instantly; on the first day of the dictatorship of the proletariat, for

instance, on October 26 (November 8), 1917, the private ownership of land was abolished without compensation for the big landowners—the big landowners were expropriated. Within the space of a few months practically all the big capitalists, owners of factories, joint-stock companies, banks, railways, and so forth, were also expropriated without compensation. The state organisation of large-scale production in industry and the transition from “workers’ control” to “workers’ management” of factories and railways—this has, by and large, already been accomplished; but in relation to agriculture it has only just begun (“state farms”, i.e., large farms organised by the workers’ state on state-owned land). Similarly, we have only just begun the organisation of various forms of co-operative societies of small farmers as a transition from petty commodity agriculture to communist agriculture.\* The same must be said of the state-organised distribution of products in place of private trade, i.e., the state procurement and delivery of grain to the cities and of industrial products to the countryside. Available statistical data on this subject will be given below.

Peasant farming continues to be petty commodity production. Here we have an extremely broad and very sound, deep-rooted basis for capitalism, a basis on which capitalism persists or arises anew in a bitter struggle against communism. The forms of this struggle are private speculation and profiteering versus state procurement of grain (and other products) and state distribution of products in general.

### 3

To illustrate these abstract theoretical propositions, let us quote actual figures.

According to the figures of the People’s Commissariat of Food, state procurements of grain in Russia between August 1, 1917, and August 1, 1918, amounted to about 30,000,000 poods, and in the following year to about 110,000,000 poods. During the first three months of the next campaign (1919-20) procurements will presumably total about 45,000,000 poods, as against 37,000,000 poods for the same period (August-October) in 1918.

These figures speak clearly of a slow but steady improvement in the state of affairs from the point of view of the victory of communism over capitalism. This improvement is being achieved in spite of difficulties without world parallel, difficulties due to the

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\* The number of “state farms” and “agricultural communes” in Soviet Russia is, as far as is known, 3,536 and 1,961 respectively, and the number of agricultural artels is 3,696. Our Central Statistical Board is at present taking an exact census of all state farms and communes. The results will be coming in in November 1919.

Civil War organised by Russian and foreign capitalists who are harnessing all the forces of the world's strongest powers.

Therefore, in spite of the lies and slanders of the bourgeoisie of all countries and of their open or masked henchmen (the "socialists" of the Second International), one thing remains beyond dispute—as far as the basic economic problem of the dictatorship of the proletariat is concerned, the victory of communism over capitalism in our country is assured. Throughout the world the bourgeoisie is raging and fuming against Bolshevism and is organising military expeditions, plots, etc., against the Bolsheviks, because it realises full well that our success in reconstructing the social economy is inevitable, provided we are not crushed by military force. And its attempts to crush us in this way are not succeeding.

The extent to which we have already vanquished capitalism in the short time we have had at our disposal, and despite the incredible difficulties under which we have had to work, will be seen from the following summarised figures. The Central Statistical Board has just prepared for the press data on the production and consumption of grain—not for the whole of Soviet Russia, but only for twenty-six gubernias.

The results are as follows:

26 gubernias of Soviet Russia	Population in millions	Production of grain (excluding seed and fodder), million poods	Grain delivered, million poods		Total amount of grain at disposal of population, million poods	Grain consumption, poods per capita
			Commis-sariat of Food	Pro-fiteers		
Producing gubernias	Urban 4.4	--	20.9	20.6	41.5	9.5
	Rural 28.6	625.4	—	—	481.8	16.9
Consuming gubernias	Urban 5.9	—	20.0	20.0	40.0	6.8
	Rural 13.8	114.0	12.1	27.8	151.4	11.0
Total (26 gubernias)	52.7	739.4	53.0	68.4	714.7	13.6

Thus, approximately half the amount of grain supplied to the cities is provided by the Commissariat of Food and the other half by profiteers. This same proportion is revealed by a careful survey, made in 1918, of the food consumed by city workers. It should be borne in mind that for bread supplied by the state the worker pays *one-ninth* of what he pays the profiteer. The profiteering price for bread is *ten times* greater than the state price; this is revealed by a detailed study of workers' budgets.

## 4

A careful study of the figures quoted shows that they present an exact picture of the fundamental features of Russia's present-day economy.

The working people have been emancipated from their age-old oppressors and exploiters, the landowners and capitalists. This step in the direction of real freedom and real equality, a step which for its extent, dimensions and rapidity is without parallel in the world, is ignored by the supporters of the bourgeoisie (including the petty-bourgeois democrats, who, when they talk of freedom and equality, mean parliamentary bourgeois democracy, which they falsely declare to be "democracy" in general, or "pure democracy" (Kautsky).

But the working people are concerned only with real equality and real freedom (freedom from the landowners and capitalists), and that is why they give the Soviet government such solid support.

In this peasant country it was the peasantry as a whole who were the first to gain, who gained most, and gained immediately from the dictatorship of the proletariat. The peasant in Russia starved under the landowners and capitalists. Throughout the long centuries of our history, the peasant never had an opportunity to work for himself: he starved while handing over hundreds of millions of poods of grain to the capitalists, for the cities and for export. Under the dictatorship of the proletariat the peasant *for the first time* has been working for himself and *feeding better than the city dweller*. For the first time the peasant has seen real freedom—freedom to eat his bread, freedom from starvation. In the distribution of the land, as we know, the maximum equality has been established; in the vast majority of cases the peasants are dividing the land according to the number of "mouths to feed".

Socialism means the abolition of classes.

In order to abolish classes it is necessary, first, to overthrow the landowners and capitalists. This part of our task has been accomplished, but it is only a part, and moreover, *not* the most difficult part. In order to abolish classes it is necessary, secondly, to abolish the difference between factory worker and peasant, to make *workers of all of them*. This cannot be done all at once. This task is incomparably more difficult and will of necessity take a long time. It is not a problem that can be solved by overthrowing a class. It can be solved only by the organisational reconstruction of the whole social economy, by a transition from individual, disunited, petty commodity production to large-scale social production. This transition must of necessity be extreme-

ly protracted. It may only be delayed and complicated by hasty and incautious administrative and legislative measures. It can be accelerated only by affording such assistance to the peasant as will enable him to effect an immense improvement in his whole farming technique, to reform it radically.

In order to solve the second and most difficult part of the problem, the proletariat, after having defeated the bourgeoisie, must unswervingly conduct its policy towards the peasantry along the following fundamental lines. The proletariat must separate, demarcate the working peasant from the peasant owner, the peasant worker from the peasant huckster, the peasant who labours from the peasant who profiteers.

In this demarcation lies the *whole essence* of socialism.

And it is not surprising that the socialists who are socialists in word but petty-bourgeois democrats in deed (the Martovs, the Chernovs, the Kautskys and others) do not understand this essence of socialism.

The demarcation we here refer to is an extremely difficult one, because in real life all the features of the "peasant", however diverse they may be, however contradictory they may be, are fused into one whole. Nevertheless, demarcation is possible; and not only is it possible, it inevitably follows from the conditions of peasant farming and peasant life. The working peasant has for ages been oppressed by the landowners, the capitalists, the hucksters and profiteers and by *their* state, including even the most democratic bourgeois republics. Throughout the ages the working peasant has trained himself to hate and loathe these oppressors and exploiters, and this "training", engendered by the conditions of life, *compels* the peasant to seek an alliance with the worker against the capitalist and against the profiteer and huckster. Yet at the same time, economic conditions, the conditions of commodity production, inevitably turn the peasant (not always, but in the vast majority of cases) into a huckster and profiteer.

The statistics quoted above reveal a striking difference between the working peasant and the peasant profiteer. That peasant who during 1918-19 delivered to the hungry workers of the cities 40,000,000 poods of grain at fixed state prices, who delivered this grain to the state agencies despite all the shortcomings of the latter, shortcomings fully realised by the workers' government, but which were unavoidable in the first period of the transition to socialism—that peasant is a working peasant, the comrade and equal of the socialist worker, his most faithful ally, his blood brother in the fight against the yoke of capital. Whereas that peasant who clandestinely sold 40,000,000 poods of grain at ten times the state price, taking advantage of the need and

hunger of the city worker, deceiving the state, and everywhere increasing and creating deceit, robbery and fraud—that peasant is a profiteer, an ally of the capitalist, a class enemy of the worker, an exploiter. For whoever possesses surplus grain gathered from land belonging to the whole state with the help of implements in which in one way or another is embodied the labour not only of the peasant but also of the worker and so on—whoever possesses a surplus of grain and profiteers in that grain is an exploiter of the hungry worker.

You are violators of freedom, equality, and democracy—they shout at us on all sides, pointing to the inequality of the worker and the peasant under our Constitution, to the dissolution of the Constituent Assembly, to the forcible confiscation of surplus grain, and so forth. We reply—never in the world has there been a state which has done so much to remove the actual inequality, the actual lack of freedom from which the working peasant has been suffering for centuries. But we shall never recognise equality with the peasant profiteer, just as we do not recognise “equality” between the exploiter and the exploited, between the sated and the hungry, nor the “freedom” for the former to rob the latter. And those educated people who refuse to recognise this difference we shall treat as whiteguards, even though they may call themselves democrats, socialists, internationalists, Kautskys, Chernovs, or Martovs.

## 5

Socialism means the abolition of classes. The dictatorship of the proletariat has done all it could to abolish classes. But classes cannot be abolished at one stroke.

And classes still *remain* and *will remain* in the era of the dictatorship of the proletariat. The dictatorship will become unnecessary when classes disappear. Without the dictatorship of the proletariat they will not disappear.

Classes have remained, but in the era of the dictatorship of the proletariat *every* class has undergone a change, and the relations between the classes have also changed. The class struggle does not disappear under the dictatorship of the proletariat; it merely assumes different forms.

Under capitalism the proletariat was an oppressed class, a class which had been deprived of the means of production, the only class which stood directly and completely opposed to the bourgeoisie, and therefore the only one capable of being revolutionary to the very end. Having overthrown the bourgeoisie and conquered political power, the proletariat has become the *ruling*

class; it wields state power, it exercises control over means of production already socialised; it guides the wavering and intermediary elements and classes; it crushes the increasingly stubborn resistance of the exploiters. All these are *specific* tasks of the class struggle, tasks which the proletariat formerly did not and could not have set itself.

The class of exploiters, the landowners and capitalists, has not disappeared and cannot disappear all at once under the dictatorship of the proletariat. The exploiters have been smashed, but not destroyed. They still have an international base in the form of international capital, of which they are a branch. They still retain certain means of production in part, they still have money, they still have vast social connections. Because they have been defeated, the energy of their resistance has increased a hundred- and a thousandfold. The "art" of state, military and economic administration gives them a superiority, and a very great superiority, so that their importance is incomparably greater than their numerical proportion of the population. The class struggle waged by the overthrown exploiters against the victorious vanguard of the exploited, i.e., the proletariat, has become incomparably more bitter. And it cannot be otherwise in the case of a revolution, unless this concept is replaced (as it is by all the heroes of the Second International) by reformist illusions.

Lastly, the peasants, like the petty bourgeoisie in general, occupy a half-way, intermediate position *even* under the dictatorship of the proletariat: on the one hand, they are a fairly large (and in backward Russia, a vast) mass of working people, united by the common interest of all working people to emancipate themselves from the landowner and the capitalist; on the other hand, they are disunited small proprietors, property-owners and traders. Such an economic position inevitably causes them to vacillate between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie. In view of the acute form which the struggle between these two classes has assumed, in view of the incredibly severe break-up of all social relations, and in view of the great attachment of the peasants and the petty bourgeoisie generally to the old, the routine, and the unchanging, it is only natural that we should inevitably find them swinging from one side to the other, that we should find them wavering, changeable, uncertain, and so on.

In relation to this class—or to these social elements—the proletariat must strive to establish its influence over it, to guide it. To give leadership to the vacillating and unstable—such is the task of the proletariat.

If we compare all the basic forces or classes and their inter-relations, as modified by the dictatorship of the proletariat, we shall realise how unutterably nonsensical and theoretically stupid



is the common petty-bourgeois idea shared by all representatives of the Second International, that the transition to socialism is possible "by means of democracy" in general. The fundamental source of this error lies in the prejudice inherited from the bourgeoisie that "democracy" is something absolute and above classes. As a matter of fact, democracy itself passes into an entirely new phase under the dictatorship of the proletariat, and the class struggle rises to a higher level, dominating over each and every form.

General talk about freedom, equality and democracy is in fact but a blind repetition of concepts shaped by the relations of commodity production. To attempt to solve the concrete problems of the dictatorship of the proletariat by such generalities is tantamount to accepting the theories and principles of the bourgeoisie in their entirety. From the point of view of the proletariat, the question can be put only in the following way: freedom from oppression by which class? equality of which class with which? democracy based on private property, or on a struggle for the abolition of private property?—and so forth.

Long ago Engels in his *Anti-Dühring* explained that the concept "equality" is moulded from the relations of commodity production; equality becomes a prejudice if it is not understood to mean the *abolition of classes*. This elementary truth regarding the distinction between the bourgeois-democratic and the socialist conception of equality is constantly being forgotten. But if it is not forgotten, it becomes obvious that by overthrowing the bourgeoisie the proletariat takes the most decisive step towards the abolition of classes, and that in order to complete the process the proletariat must continue its class struggle, making use of the apparatus of state power and employing various methods of combating, influencing and bringing pressure to bear on the overthrown bourgeoisie and the vacillating petty bourgeoisie.

*(To be continued)*

October 30, 1919

*Pravda* No. 250, November 7, 1919  
Signed: *N. Lenin*

*Collected Works*, Vol. 30,  
pp. 107-17

This article remained unfinished —*Ed.*

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**ADDRESS TO THE SECOND ALL-RUSSIA  
CONGRESS OF COMMUNIST ORGANISATIONS  
OF THE PEOPLES OF THE EAST<sup>96</sup>  
NOVEMBER 22, 1919**

Comrades, I am very glad of the opportunity to greet this Congress of Communist comrades representing Moslem organisations of the East, and to say a few words about the situation now obtaining in Russia and throughout the world. The subject of my address is current affairs, and it seems to me that the most essential aspects of this question at present are the attitude of the peoples of the East to imperialism, and the revolutionary movement among those peoples. It is self-evident that this revolutionary movement of the peoples of the East can now develop effectively, can reach a successful issue, only in direct association with the revolutionary struggle of our Soviet Republic against international imperialism. Owing to a number of circumstances, among them the backwardness of Russia and her vast area, and the fact that she constitutes a frontier between Europe and Asia, between the West and the East, we had to bear the whole brunt—and we regard that as a great honour—of being the pioneers of the world struggle against imperialism. Consequently, the whole course of development in the immediate future presages a still broader and more strenuous struggle against international imperialism, and will inevitably be linked with the struggle of the Soviet Republic against the forces of united imperialism—of Germany, France, Britain and the U.S.A.

As regards the military aspect of the matter, you know how favourable our situation now is on all the fronts. I shall not dwell in detail on this question; I shall only say that the Civil War which was forced upon us by international imperialism has in two years inflicted incalculable hardship upon the Russian Socialist Federative Soviet Republic, and imposed upon the peasants and workers a burden so intolerable that it often seemed they would not be able to endure it. But at the same time, because of its brute violence, because of the ruthlessly brutal onslaught

of our so-called allies, turned wild beasts, who robbed us even before the socialist revolution, this war has performed a miracle and turned people weary of fighting and seemingly incapable of bearing another war into warriors who have not only withstood the war for two years but are bringing it to a victorious end. The victories we are now gaining over Kolchak, Yudenich and Denikin signify the advent of a new phase in the history of the struggle of world imperialism against the countries and nations which have risen up to fight for their emancipation. In this respect, the two years of our Civil War have fully confirmed what has long been known to history—that the character of a war and its success depend chiefly upon the internal regime of the country that goes to war, that war is a reflection of the internal policy conducted by the given country before the war. All this is inevitably reflected in the prosecution of a war.

Which class waged the war, and is continuing to wage it, is a very important question. Only due to our Civil War being waged by workers and peasants who have emancipated themselves, and to its being a continuation of the political struggle for the emancipation of the working people from the capitalists of their own country and of the whole world—only thanks to this were people to be found in such a backward country as Russia, worn out as she was by four years of imperialist war, who were strong-willed enough to carry on that war during two years of incredible and unparalleled hardship and difficulty.

This was very strikingly illustrated in the history of the Civil War in the case of Kolchak. Kolchak was an enemy who had the assistance of all the world's strongest powers; he had a railway which was protected by some hundred thousand foreign troops, including the finest troops of the world imperialists, such as the Japanese, for example, who had been trained for the imperialist war, but took practically no part in it and therefore suffered little; Kolchak had the backing of the Siberian peasants, who were the most prosperous and had never known serfdom, and therefore, naturally, were farthest of all from communism. It seemed that Kolchak was an invincible force, because his troops were the advance guard of international imperialism. To this day, Japanese and Czechoslovak troops and the troops of a number of other imperialist nations are operating in Siberia. Nevertheless, the more than a year's experience of Kolchak's rule over Siberia and her vast natural resources, which was at first supported by the socialist parties of the Second International, by the Mensheviks and the Socialist-Revolutionaries, who set up the Constituent Assembly Committee front, and which therefore, under these conditions, from the standpoint of the man in the street and of the ordinary course of history, appeared to be firm and

invincible—that experience actually revealed the following. The farther Kolchak advanced into the heart of Russia, the more he wore himself out, and in the end we have witnessed Soviet Russia's complete triumph over Kolchak. Here we undoubtedly have practical proof that the united forces of workers and peasants who have been emancipated from the capitalist yoke can perform real miracles. Here we have practical proof that when a revolutionary war really does attract and interest the working and oppressed people, when it makes them conscious that they are fighting the exploiters—such a revolutionary war engenders the strength and ability to perform miracles.

I think that what the Red Army has accomplished, its struggle, and the history of its victory, will be of colossal, epochal significance for all the peoples of the East. It will show them that, weak as they may be, and invincible as may seem the power of the European oppressors, who in the struggle employ all the marvels of technology and of the military art—nevertheless, a revolutionary war waged by oppressed peoples, if it really succeeds in arousing the millions of working and exploited people, harbours such potentialities, such miracles, that the emancipation of the peoples of the East is now quite practicable, from the standpoint not only of the prospects of the international revolution, but also of the direct military experience acquired in Asia, in Siberia, the experience of the Soviet Republic, which has suffered the armed invasion of all the powerful imperialist countries.

Furthermore, the experience of the Civil War in Russia has shown us and the Communists of all countries that, in the crucible of civil war, the development of revolutionary enthusiasm is accompanied by a powerful inner cohesion. War tests all the economic and organisational forces of a nation. In the final analysis, infinitely hard as the war has been for the workers and peasants, who are suffering famine and cold, it may be said on the basis of these two years' experience that we are winning and will continue to win, because we have a hinterland, and a strong one, because, despite famine and cold, the peasants and workers stand together, have grown strong, and answer every heavy blow with a greater cohesion of their forces and increased economic might. And it is this alone that has made possible the victories over Kolchak, Yudenich and their allies, the strongest powers in the world. The past two years have shown, on the one hand, that a revolutionary war can be developed, and, on the other, that the Soviet system is growing stronger under the heavy blows of the foreign invasion, the aim of which is to destroy quickly the revolutionary centre, the republic of workers and peasants who have dared to declare war on international imperial-

ism. But instead of destroying the workers and peasants of Russia, these heavy blows have served to harden them.

That is the chief lesson, the chief content of the present period. We are on the eve of decisive victories over Denikin, the last enemy left on our soil. We feel strong and may reiterate a thousand times over that we are not mistaken when we say that internally the Republic has become consolidated, and that we shall emerge from the war against Denikin very much stronger and better prepared for the task of erecting the socialist edifice—to which we have been able to devote all too little time and energy during the Civil War, but to which, now that we are setting foot on a free road, we shall undoubtedly be able to devote ourselves entirely.

In Western Europe we see the decay of imperialism. You know that a year ago it seemed even to the German socialists, and to the vast majority of socialists—who did not understand the state of affairs—that what was in progress was a struggle of two world imperialist groups, and they believed that this struggle constituted the whole of history, that there was no force capable of producing anything else. It seemed to them that even socialists had no alternative but to join sides with one of the groups of powerful world predators. That is how it seemed at the close of October 1918. But we find that in the year that has since elapsed world history has witnessed unparalleled events, profound and far-reaching events, and these have opened the eyes of many socialists who during the imperialist war were patriots and justified their conduct on the plea that they were faced with an enemy; they justified their alliance with the British and French imperialists on the grounds that these were supposedly bringing delivery from German imperialism. See how many illusions were shattered by that war! We are witnessing the decay of German imperialism, a decay which has led not only to a republican, but even to a socialist revolution. You know that in Germany today the class struggle has become still more acute and that civil war is drawing nearer and nearer—a war of the German proletariat against the German imperialists, who have adopted republican colours, but who remain imperialists.

Everyone knows that the social revolution is maturing in Western Europe by leaps and bounds, and that the same thing is happening in America and in Britain, the countries ostensibly representing culture and civilisation, victors over the Huns the German imperialists. Yet when it came to the Treaty of Versailles,<sup>97</sup> everyone saw that it was a hundred times more rapacious than the Treaty of Brest<sup>98</sup> which the German robbers forced upon us, and that it was the heaviest blow the capitalists and imperialists of those luckless victor countries could possibly have

struck at themselves. The Treaty of Versailles opened the eyes of the people of the victor nations, and showed that in the case of Britain and France, even though they are democratic states, we have before us not representatives of culture and civilisation, but countries ruled by imperialist predators. The internal struggle among these predators is developing so swiftly that we may rejoice in the knowledge that the Treaty of Versailles is only a seeming victory for the jubilant imperialists, and that in reality it signifies the bankruptcy of the entire imperialist world and the resolute abandonment by the working people of those socialists who during the war allied themselves with the representatives of decaying imperialism and defended one of the groups of belligerent predators. The eyes of the working people have been opened because the Treaty of Versailles was a rapacious peace and showed that France and Britain had actually fought Germany in order to strengthen their rule over the colonies and to enhance their imperialist might. That internal struggle grows broader as time goes on. Today I saw a wireless message from London dated November 21, in which American journalists—men who cannot be suspected of sympathising with revolutionaries—say that in France an unprecedented outburst of hatred towards the Americans is to be observed, because the Americans refuse to ratify the Treaty of Versailles.

Britain and France are victors, but they are up to their ears in debt to America, who has decided that the French and the British may consider themselves victors as much as they like, but that she is going to skim the cream and exact usurious interest for her assistance during the war; and the guarantee of this is to be the American Navy which is now being built and is overtaking the British Navy in size. And the crudeness of the Americans' rapacious imperialism may be seen from the fact that American agents are buying white slaves, women and girls, and shipping them to America for the development of prostitution. Just think, free, cultured America supplying white slaves for brothels! Conflicts with American agents are occurring in Poland and Belgium. That is a tiny illustration of what is taking place on a vast scale in every little country which received assistance from the Entente. Take Poland, for instance. You find American agents and profiteers going there and buying up all the wealth of Poland, who boasts that she is now an independent power. Poland is being bought up by American agents. There is not a factory or branch of industry which is not in the pockets of the Americans. The Americans have become so brazen that they are beginning to enslave that "great and free victor", France, who was formerly a country of usurers, but is now deep in debt to America, because she has lost her economic strength, and

has not enough grain or coal of her own and cannot develop her material resources on a large scale, while America insists that the tribute be paid unreservedly and in full. It is thus becoming increasingly apparent that France, Britain and other powerful countries are economically bankrupt. In the French elections the Clericals have gained the upper hand. The French people, who were deceived into devoting all their strength supposedly to the defence of freedom and democracy against Germany, have now been rewarded with an interminable debt, with the sneers of the rapacious American imperialists and, on top of it, with a Clerical majority consisting of representatives of the most savage reaction.

The situation all over the world has become immeasurably more complicated. Our victory over Kolchak and Yudenich, those lackeys of international capital, is a big one; but far bigger, though not so evident, is the victory we are gaining on an international scale. That victory consists in the internal decay of imperialism, which is unable to send its troops against us. The Entente tried it, but to no purpose, because its troops become demoralised when they contact our troops and acquaint themselves with our Russian Soviet Constitution, translated into their languages. Despite the influence of the leaders of putrid socialism, our Constitution will always win the sympathy of the working people. The word "Soviet" is now understood by everybody, and the Soviet Constitution has been translated into all languages and is known to every worker. He knows that it is the constitution of working people, the political system of working people who are calling for victory over international capital, that it is a triumph we have achieved over the international imperialists. This victory of ours has had its repercussions in all imperialist countries, since we have deprived them of their own troops, won them over, deprived them of the possibility of using those troops against Soviet Russia.

They tried to wage war with the troops of other countries—Finland, Poland, and Latvia—but nothing came of it. British Minister Churchill, speaking in the House of Commons several weeks ago, boasted—and it was cabled all over the world—that a campaign of fourteen nations against Soviet Russia had been organised, and that this would result in victory over Russia by the New Year. And it is true that many nations participated in it—Finland, the Ukraine, Poland, Georgia, as well as the Czechoslovaks, the Japanese, the French, the British, and the Germans. But we know what came of it! We know that the Estonians left Yudenich's forces in the lurch; and now a fierce controversy is going on in the press because the Estonians do not want to help him, while Finland, much as her bourgeoisie want-

ed it, has not assisted Yudenich either. Thus the second attempt to attack us has likewise failed. The first stage was the dispatch by the Entente of its own troops, equipped according to all the rules of military technique, so that it seemed they would defeat the Soviet Republic. They have already withdrawn from the Caucasus, Archangel and the Crimea; they still remain in Murmansk, as the Czechoslovaks do in Siberia, but only as isolated groups. The first attempt of the Entente to defeat us with its own forces ended in victory for us. The second attempt consisted in launching against us nations which are our neighbours, and which are entirely dependent financially on the Entente, and in trying to force them to crush us, as a nest of socialism. But that attempt, too, ended in failure: it turned out that not one of these little countries is capable of waging such a war. What is more, hatred of the Entente has taken firm root in every little country. If Finland did not set out to capture Petrograd when Yudenich had already captured Krasnoye Selo, it was because she hesitated, realising that she could live independently side by side with Soviet Russia, but could not live in peace with the Entente. All little nations have felt that. It is felt in Finland, Lithuania, Estonia, and Poland, where chauvinism is rampant, but where there is hatred of the Entente, which is expanding its exploitation in those countries. And now, accurately assessing the course of developments, we may say without exaggeration that not only the first, but also the second stage of the international war against the Soviet Republic has failed. All that remains for us to do now is to defeat Denikin's forces, and they are already half-defeated.

Such is the present Russian and international situation, which I have summarised briefly in my address. Permit me, in conclusion, to say something about the situation that is developing in respect of the nationalities of the East. You are representatives of the communist organisations and Communist Parties of various Eastern peoples. I must say that the Russian Bolsheviks have succeeded in forcing a breach in the old imperialism, in undertaking the exceedingly difficult, but also exceedingly noble task of blazing new paths of revolution, whereas you, the representatives of the working people of the East, have before you a task that is still greater and newer. It is becoming quite clear that the socialist revolution which is impending for the whole world will not be merely the victory of the proletariat of each country over its own bourgeoisie. That would be possible if revolutions came easily and swiftly. We know that the imperialists will not allow this, that all countries are armed against their domestic Bolshevism and that their one thought is how to defeat Bolshevism at home. That is why in every country a civil war is brew-



ing in which the old socialist compromisers are enlisted on the side of the bourgeoisie. Hence, the socialist revolution will not be solely, or chiefly, a struggle of the revolutionary proletarians in each country against their bourgeoisie—no, it will be a struggle of all the imperialist-oppressed colonies and countries, of all dependent countries, against international imperialism. Characterising the approach of the world social revolution in the Party Programme we adopted last March, we said that the civil war of the working people against the imperialists and exploiters in all the advanced countries is beginning to be combined with national wars against international imperialism. That is confirmed by the course of the revolution, and will be more and more confirmed as time goes on. It will be the same in the East.

We know that in the East the masses will rise as independent participants, as builders of a new life, because hundreds of millions of the people belong to dependent, underprivileged nations, which until now have been objects of international imperialist policy, and have only existed as material to fertilise capitalist culture and civilisation. And when they talk of handing out mandates for colonies, we know very well that it means handing out mandates for spoliation and plunder—handing out to an insignificant section of the world's population the right to exploit the majority of the population of the globe. That majority, which up till then had been completely outside the orbit of historical progress, because it could not constitute an independent revolutionary force, ceased, as we know, to play such a passive role at the beginning of the twentieth century. We know that 1905 was followed by revolutions in Turkey, Persia and China, and that a revolutionary movement developed in India. The imperialist war likewise contributed to the growth of the revolutionary movement, because the European imperialists had to enlist whole colonial regiments in their struggle. The imperialist war aroused the East also and drew its peoples into international politics. Britain and France armed colonial peoples and helped them to familiarise themselves with military technique and up-to-date machines. That knowledge they will use against the imperialist gentry. The period of the awakening of the East in the contemporary revolution is being succeeded by a period in which all the Eastern peoples will participate in deciding the destiny of the whole world, so as not to be simply objects of the enrichment of others. The peoples of the East are becoming alive to the need for practical action, the need for every nation to take part in shaping the destiny of all mankind.

That is why I think that in the history of the development of the world revolution—which, judging by its beginning, will

continue for many years and will demand much effort—that in the revolutionary struggle, in the revolutionary movement you will be called upon to play a big part and to merge with our struggle against international imperialism. Your participation in the international revolution will confront you with a complicated and difficult task, the accomplishment of which will serve as the foundation for our common success, because here the majority of the people for the first time begin to act independently and will be an active factor in the fight to overthrow international imperialism.

Most of the Eastern peoples are in a worse position than the most backward country in Europe—Russia. But in our struggle against feudal survivals and capitalism, we succeeded in uniting the peasants and workers of Russia; and it was because the peasants and workers united against capitalism and feudalism that our victory was so easy. Here contact with the peoples of the East is particularly important, because the majority of the Eastern peoples are typical representatives of the working people—not workers who have passed through the school of capitalist factories, but typical representatives of the working and exploited peasant masses who are victims of medieval oppression. The Russian revolution showed how the proletarians, after defeating capitalism and uniting with the vast diffuse mass of working peasants, rose up victoriously against medieval oppression. Our Soviet Republic must now muster all the awakening peoples of the East and, together with them, wage a struggle against international imperialism.

In this respect you are confronted with a task which has not previously confronted the Communists of the world: relying upon the general theory and practice of communism, you must adapt yourselves to specific conditions such as do not exist in the European countries; you must be able to apply that theory and practice to conditions in which the bulk of the population are peasants, and in which the task is to wage a struggle against medieval survivals and not against capitalism. That is a difficult and specific task, but a very thankful one, because masses that have taken no part in the struggle up to now are being drawn into it, and also because the organisation of communist cells in the East gives you an opportunity to maintain the closest contact with the Third International. You must find specific forms for this alliance of the foremost proletarians of the world with the labouring and exploited masses of the East whose conditions are in many cases medieval. We have accomplished on a small scale in our country what you will do on a big scale and in big countries. And that latter task you will, I hope, perform with success. Thanks to the communist organisations in the East.

of which you here are the representatives, you have contact with the advanced revolutionary proletariat. Your task is to continue to ensure that communist propaganda is carried on in every country in a language the people understand.

It is self-evident that final victory can be won only by the proletariat of all the advanced countries of the world, and we, the Russians, are beginning the work which the British, French or German proletariat will consolidate. But we see that they will not be victorious without the aid of the working people of all the oppressed colonial nations, first and foremost, of Eastern nations. We must realise that the transition to communism cannot be accomplished by the vanguard alone. The task is to arouse the working masses to revolutionary activity, to independent action and to organisation, regardless of the level they have reached; to translate the true communist doctrine, which was intended for the Communists of the more advanced countries, into the language of every people; to carry out those practical tasks which must be carried out immediately, and to join the proletarians of other countries in a common struggle.

Such are the problems whose solution you will not find in any communist book, but will find in the common struggle begun by Russia. You will have to tackle that problem and solve it through your own independent experience. In that you will be assisted, on the one hand, by close alliance with the vanguard of the working people of other countries, and, on the other, by ability to find the right approach to the peoples of the East whom you here represent. You will have to base yourselves on the bourgeois nationalism which is awakening, and must awaken, among those peoples, and which has its historical justification. At the same time, you must find your way to the working and exploited masses of every country and tell them in a language they understand that their only hope of emancipation lies in the victory of the international revolution, and that the international proletariat is the only ally of all the hundreds of millions of the working and exploited peoples of the East.

Such is the immense task which confronts you, and which, thanks to the era of revolution and the growth of the revolutionary movement—of that there can be no doubt—will, by the joint efforts of the communist organisations of the East, be successfully accomplished and crowned by complete victory over international imperialism.

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## **EIGHTH ALL-RUSSIA CONFERENCE OF THE R.C.P.(B.)**

**DECEMBER 2-4, 1919**

### **DRAFT RESOLUTION ON FOREIGN POLICY**

The Russian Socialist Federative Soviet Republic wishes to live in peace with all peoples and devote all its efforts to internal development so as to put production, transport and government affairs in order on the basis of the Soviet system; this has so far been prevented by the intervention of the Entente and the starvation blockade.

The workers' and peasants' government has made repeated peace proposals to the Entente powers—the message from the People's Commissariat of Foreign Affairs to the American representative, Mr. Poole, on August 5, 1918; to President Wilson on October 24, 1918; to all Entente governments through representatives of neutral countries on November 3, 1918; a message from the Sixth All-Russia Congress of Soviets on November 7, 1918; Litvinov's Note in Stockholm to all Entente representatives on December 23, 1918; then there were the messages of January 12, January 17 and February 4, 1919, and the draft treaty drawn up jointly with Bullitt on March 12, 1919; and a message through Nansen on May 7, 1919.

The Seventh Congress of Soviets fully approves these many steps taken by the Council of People's Commissars and the People's Commissariat of Foreign Affairs, once more confirms its lasting desire for peace and again proposes to the Entente powers, Britain, France, the United States of America, Italy and Japan, individually and collectively, to begin immediately negotiations on peace; the Congress instructs the All-Russia Central Executive Committee, the Council of People's Commissars and the People's Commissariat of Foreign Affairs to continue this peace policy systematically (or: to continue this peace policy systematically, taking all appropriate measures to ensure its success).

Written on December 2, 1919

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## **SPEECH DELIVERED AT THE FIRST CONGRESS OF AGRICULTURAL COMMUNES AND AGRICULTURAL ARTELS<sup>99</sup> DECEMBER 4, 1919**

Comrades, I am very glad to greet your first congress of agricultural communes and agricultural artels on behalf of the government. Of course, from all the activities of the Soviet government you know what tremendous significance we attach to the communes, artels, and all organisations generally that aim at transforming and at gradually assisting the transformation of small, individual peasant farming into socialised, co-operative, or artel farming. You are aware that the Soviet government long ago allotted the sum of one thousand million rubles to assist efforts of this kind.<sup>100</sup> The Statute on Socialist Agrarian Measures<sup>101</sup> particularly stresses the significance of communes, artels, and all enterprises for the joint cultivation of the land, and the Soviet government is exerting every effort to ensure that this law shall not remain on paper only, but shall really produce the benefits it is intended to produce.

The importance of all enterprises of this kind is tremendous, because if the old, poverty-stricken peasant farming remains unchanged there can be no question of building up a stable socialist society. Only if we succeed in proving to the peasants in practice the advantages of common, collective, co-operative, artel cultivation of the soil, only if we succeed in helping the peasant by means of co-operative or artel farming, will the working class, which wields state power, be really able to convince the peasant that its policy is correct and thus secure the real and lasting following of the millions of peasants. It is therefore impossible to exaggerate the importance of every measure intended to encourage co-operative, artel forms of farming. We have millions of individual farms in our country, scattered and dispersed throughout remote rural districts. *It would be absolutely absurd to attempt to reshape these farms in any rapid way, by issuing an order or bringing pressure to bear from without. We fully realise that we can influence the millions of small peasant farms only gradually and cautiously and only by a successful practical*

example, for the peasants are far too practical and cling far too tenaciously to the old methods of farming to consent to any serious change merely on the basis of advice or book instructions. That is impossible, and it would be absurd. Only when it has been proved in practice, by experience comprehensible to the peasants, that the transition to the co-operative, artel form of farming is essential and possible, shall we be entitled to say that in this vast peasant country, Russia, an important step towards socialist agriculture has been taken. Consequently, the vast importance that attaches to communes, artels, and co-operative farms lays on all of you tremendous state and socialist obligations and naturally makes it imperative for the Soviet government and its representatives to treat this question with especial attention and caution.

In our law on socialist agrarian measures it is stated that we consider it the absolute duty of all co-operative, artel agricultural enterprises not to isolate and sever themselves from the surrounding peasant population, but to afford them assistance. This is stipulated in the law, it is repeated in the rules of all the communes, artels, and co-operatives; it is constantly stressed in the instructions and rulings of our Commissariat of Agriculture and of all Soviet government bodies. But the whole point is to find a really practical method of putting this into effect. I am still not convinced that we have overcome this principal difficulty. And I should like your congress, at which practical workers in collective farming from all parts of Russia have the opportunity of sharing their experience, to put an end to all doubts and to prove that we are mastering, are beginning to master in practice, the task of consolidating the artels, co-operative farms, and communes and every form of enterprise for collective and socialised farming generally. But in order to prove this, *practical* results are required.

When we read the rules of the agricultural communes, or books devoted to this question, it might appear that we devote too much space in them to propaganda and the theoretical justification of the need to organise communes. Of course, that is necessary, for without detailed propaganda, without explaining the advantages of co-operative farming, and without repeating this idea thousands and thousands of times we cannot expect the broad masses of peasants to take an interest in it and undertake practical tests of the methods of carrying it into effect. Of course, propaganda is necessary, and there is no need to fear repetition, for what may appear to us to be repetition is most likely for hundreds and thousands of peasants not repetition, but a truth revealed for the first time. You may think that we are devoting too much attention to propaganda, but it must be

said that we ought to devote a hundred times more. And when I say this, I mean it in the sense that if we go to the peasant with general explanations of the advantages of organising agricultural communes, and at the same time are unable in actual fact to show the practical advantage that will accrue to him from co-operative, artel farms, he will not have the slightest confidence in our propaganda.

The law says that the communes, artels, and co-operative farms must assist the surrounding peasant population. But the state, the workers' government, is providing a fund of one thousand million rubles for the purpose of assisting the agricultural communes and artels. And, of course, if any commune were to assist the peasants out of this fund I am afraid it would only arouse ridicule among the peasants. And it would be absolutely justified. Every peasant will say: "It goes without saying that if you are getting a fund of one thousand million rubles it means nothing to you to throw a little our way." I am afraid the peasant will only jeer, for he pays considerable attention to this matter, and is very distrustful of it. He has been accustomed for centuries to expect only oppression from the state, and he is therefore in the habit of regarding everything that comes from the state with suspicion. And if the agricultural communes give assistance to the peasants merely for the purpose of fulfilling the letter of the law, such assistance will be not only useless but harmful. For the name "agricultural commune" is a great one; it is associated with the conception of communism. It will be a good thing if the communes show in practice that they are indeed seriously working for the improvement of peasant farming; that will undoubtedly enhance the prestige of the Communists and the Communist Party. But it has frequently happened that the communes have only succeeded in provoking a negative attitude among the peasantry, and the word "commune" has even at times become a call to fight communism. And this happened not only when stupid attempts were made to drive the peasants into the communes by force. The absurdity of this was so obvious that the Soviet government long ago forbade it. And I hope that if isolated examples of such coercion are to be met with now, they are very few, and that you will take advantage of the present congress to see to it that the last trace of this outrage is swept from the face of the Soviet Republic, and that the neighbouring peasant population may not be able to point to a single instance in support of the old opinion that membership of a commune is in one way or another associated with coercion.

But even if we eliminate this old shortcoming, completely suppress this outrage, it will still be only a small fraction of what has to be done. For it will still be necessary for the state to help

the communes, and we would not be Communists and champions of socialist economy if we did not give state aid to every kind of collective agricultural enterprise. We must do so because it is in accordance with all our aims, and because we know perfectly well that these co-operatives, artels, and collective organisations are innovations, and if support is not given them by the working class in power they will not take root. In order that they should take root, and in view of the fact that the state is affording them monetary and every other kind of support, we must see to it that they do not provoke the ridicule of the peasants. What we must be most careful about is that the peasants should not say of members of communes, artels and co-operatives that they are state pensioners, that they differ from the peasants only by the fact that they are receiving privileges. If we are to give land and subsidies for building purposes out of the thousand-million-ruble fund, any fool will live somewhat better than the ordinary peasant. What is there communistic here the peasant will ask, and where is the improvement? What are we to respect them for? If you pick out a few score or a few hundred individuals and give them a thousand million, of course they will work.

Such an attitude on the part of the peasants is most to be feared, and I should like to draw the attention of the comrades assembled at the congress to this. The problem must be solved practically, so as to enable us to say that we have not only averted this danger, but have also found means whereby the peasant will not be led to think in this way, but will, on the contrary, find in every commune and artel something which the state is assisting, will find in them new methods of farming which show their advantages over the old methods not by books and speeches (that is not worth much) but in practice. That is why the problem is so difficult to solve, and that is why it is hard for us, who have only dry figures before us, to judge whether we have proved in practice that every commune and every artel is really superior to every enterprise of the old system and that the workers' government is here helping the peasant.

I think that for the practical solution of this problem, it would be very desirable for you, who have a practical acquaintance with a number of neighbouring communes, artels and co-operatives, to work out real, practical methods for the verification of the implementation of the law demanding that the agricultural communes give assistance to the surrounding population, the way the transition to socialist farming is being put into effect and what concrete forms it is taking in each commune, artel and co-operative farm, how it is actually being put into practice, how many co-operatives and communes are in fact putting it



into practice, and how many are only preparing to do so, how many cases have been observed when the communes have given assistance, and what character this assistance bears—philanthropic or socialist.

If out of the aid given them by the state the communes and artels set aside a portion for the peasants, that will only give the peasants grounds for believing that they are merely being helped by kind-hearted people, but will not by any means be proof of transition to a socialist system. The peasants have for ages been accustomed to regard such "kind-hearted people" with suspicion. We must know how to keep a check on the way this new social order has manifested itself, by what methods it is being proved to the peasants that co-operative, artel cultivation of the soil is better than individual peasant farming, and that it is better *not* because of state aid. We must be able to show the peasants the practical realisation of this new order even *without* state aid.

Unfortunately, I shall not be able to stay till the end of your congress and I shall therefore be unable to take part in elaborating these methods of control. But I am certain that with the aid of the comrades in charge of our Commissariat of Agriculture you will succeed in finding these methods. I have read with great satisfaction an article by the People's Commissar of Agriculture, Comrade Sereda, in which he stresses that the communes and co-operatives must not isolate themselves from the surrounding peasant population but must endeavour to improve the latter's farms. A commune must be organised so that it will serve as a model, and the neighbouring peasants will be attracted to it. We must be able to set them a practical example of how to assist people who are running their farms under the difficult conditions of a shortage of goods and general economic chaos. In order to define the practical methods of effecting this, instructions must be drawn up in the greatest detail and should enumerate all forms of assistance that can be given to neighbouring peasants; the instructions should ask each commune to give an account of what it has done to help the peasants, and indicate methods whereby each of the existing two thousand communes and nearly four thousand artels may become a nucleus capable of strengthening the peasants' conviction that collective farming, as a form of transition to socialism, is something of benefit to them, and not a whim or the ravings of a disordered mind.

I have already said that the law requires the communes to render assistance to the surrounding peasant population. We could not express ourselves otherwise in the law, or give any practical instructions in it. It was our business to establish the general principles, and to count on politically-conscious comrades in

the localities scrupulously applying the law and being able to find a thousand ways of applying it practically in the concrete economic conditions of each given locality. But, of course, every law can be evaded, even under pretence of observing it. And so the law on assisting the peasants, if it is not scrupulously applied, may become a mere game, and lead to results quite contrary to those intended.

The communes must develop in such a way that peasant farming conditions will begin to change by contact with them and by the economic help they give, so that every commune, artel, and co-operative will be able to make the beginnings of an improvement in these conditions and put them into effect, thereby proving to the peasants in practice that this change can be only of benefit to them.

Naturally, you may think we shall be told that in order to improve farming we need conditions that differ from the present economic chaos caused by four years of imperialist war and the two years of civil war forced on us by the imperialists. With such conditions as now exist in our country, how can one think of any widespread improvement in farming—God grant that we may carry on somehow and not die of starvation!

It will be only natural for doubts of this kind to be expressed. But if I had to reply to such objections, I would say this: assume that owing to the disorganisation of economic life, to economic chaos, goods shortage, poor transport and the destruction of cattle and implements, and extensive improvement of farming cannot be effected. But there is no doubt that a certain, not extensive, improvement is possible in a number of individual cases. But let us assume that even this cannot be done. Does that mean that the communes cannot produce changes in the life of the neighbouring peasants and cannot prove to the peasants that collective agricultural enterprises are not an artificial, hothouse growth, but a new form of assistance to the working peasants on the part of the workers' government, and an aid to the working peasants in their struggle against the kulaks? I am convinced that even if the matter is regarded in this way, even if we grant the impossibility of effecting improvements under the present conditions of economic chaos, a very great deal may nevertheless be accomplished if there are conscientious Communists in the communes and artels.

To bear this out, I would refer to what in our cities has been called subbotniks. This is the name given to the several hours' unpaid voluntary work done by city workers over and above the usual working day and devoted to some public need. The subbotniks were initiated in Moscow by the workers of the Moscow-Kazan Railway. One of the appeals of the Soviet govern-

ment pointed out that the Red Army men at the front are making unprecedented sacrifices, and that, in spite of all the hardships they are obliged to undergo, they are gaining unprecedented victories over our enemies, and at the same time stated that we can clinch our victories only if such heroism and such self-sacrifice are displayed not only at the front, but also in the rear. The Moscow workers responded to this appeal by organising subbotniks. There can be no doubt that the workers of Moscow are experiencing greater privation and want than the peasants. If you were to acquaint yourselves with their conditions of life and give some thought to the fact that in spite of these incredibly hard conditions they were able to organise subbotniks, you would agree that no reference to arduous conditions can serve as an excuse for not doing what can be done under any conditions by applying the method of the Moscow workers. Nothing helped so much to enhance the prestige of the Communist Party in the towns, to increase the respect of non-party workers for the Communists, as these subbotniks when they ceased to be isolated instances and when non-party workers saw in practice that the members of the governing Communist Party have obligations and duties, and that the Communists admit new members to the Party not in order that they may enjoy the advantages connected with the position of a governing party, but that they may set an example of real communist labour, i.e., labour performed gratis. Communism is the highest stage in the development of socialism, when people work because they realise the necessity of working for the common good. We know that we cannot establish a socialist order now—God grant that it may be established in our country in our children's time, or perhaps in our grandchildren's time. But we say that the members of the governing Communist Party assume the greater burden of the difficulties in the fight against capitalism, mobilise the best Communists for the front, and demand of such as cannot be used for this purpose that they take part in subbotniks.

By organising these subbotniks, which have become widespread in every large industrial city, participation in which the Party now demands from every one of its members, punishing non-fulfilment even by expulsion from the Party—by applying this method in the communes, artels, and co-operatives, you can, and must, even under the very worst conditions, see to it that the peasant regards every commune, artel, and co-operative as an association which is distinguished not by the fact that it receives state subsidies, but by the fact that within it are gathered some of the best working-class people who not only preach socialism for others, but are themselves capable of realising it, who are capable of showing that even under the

worst conditions they can conduct their farms on communist lines and help the surrounding peasant population in every possible way. On this question there can be no such excuses as the goods shortage, or absence of seed, or loss of cattle. This will be a test which, at all events, will enable us to say definitely to what extent the difficult task we have taken on ourselves has been carried out in practice.

I am certain that this general meeting of representatives of communes, co-operatives and artels will discuss this and will realise that the application of this method will really serve as a powerful instrument for the consolidation of the communes and co-operatives, and will achieve such practical results that nowhere in Russia will there be a single case of hostility towards the communes, artels, and co-operatives on the part of the peasants. But that is not enough. What is required is that the peasants should show a sympathetic attitude towards them. For our part, we representatives of the Soviet government will do everything in our power to help to bring this about and to see to it that state assistance from the thousand-million-ruble fund, or from other sources, shall be forthcoming only in cases when the labour communes or artels have actually established closer contacts with the life of their peasant neighbours. Unless these conditions are fulfilled, we consider any assistance given to the artels and the co-operatives not only useless, but definitely harmful. Assistance given by the communes to the neighbouring peasants must not be regarded as assistance which is merely given out of superfluity; this assistance must be socialist assistance, i.e., it must enable the peasants to replace their isolated, individual farming by co-operative farming. And this can be done only by the subbotnik method of which I have here spoken.

If you learn from the experience of the city workers, who although living in conditions immeasurably worse than those of the peasants, initiated the movement for subbotniks, I am certain that, with your general and unanimous support, we shall bring about a situation when each of the several thousand existing communes and artels will become a genuine nursery for communist ideas and views among the peasants, a practical example showing them that, although it is still a small and feeble growth, it is nevertheless not an artificial, hothouse growth, but a true growth of the new socialist system. Only then shall we gain a lasting victory over the old ignorance, impoverishment and want, and only then will the difficulties we meet in our future course hold out no terrors for us.

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## LETTER TO THE WORKERS AND PEASANTS OF THE UKRAINE APROPOS OF THE VICTORIES OVER DENIKIN

Comrades, four months ago, towards the end of August 1919, I had occasion to address a letter to the workers and peasants in connection with the victory over Kolchak.\*

I am now having this letter reprinted in full for the workers and peasants of the Ukraine in connection with the victories over Denikin.

Red troops have taken Kiev, Poltava and Kharkov and are advancing victoriously on Rostov. The Ukraine is seething with revolt against Denikin. All forces must be rallied for the final rout of Denikin's army, which has been trying to restore the power of the landowners and capitalists. We must destroy Denikin to safeguard ourselves against even the slightest possibility of a new incursion.

The workers and peasants of the Ukraine should familiarise themselves with the lessons which all Russian workers and peasants have drawn from the conquest of Siberia by Kolchak and her liberation by Red troops after many months of landowner and capitalist tyranny.

Denikin's rule in the Ukraine has been as severe an ordeal as Kolchak's rule was in Siberia. There can be no doubt that the lessons of this severe ordeal will give the Ukrainian workers and peasants—as they did the workers and peasants of the Urals and Siberia—a clearer understanding of the tasks of Soviet power and induce them to defend it more staunchly.

In Great Russia the system of landed estates has been completely abolished. The same must be done in the Ukraine, and the Soviet power of the Ukrainian workers and peasants must effect the complete abolition of the landed estates and the complete liberation of the Ukrainian workers and peasants from all oppression by the landowners, and from the landowners themselves.

\* See this volume, pp. 216-22 —*Ed.*

But apart from this task, and a number of others which confronted and still confront both the Great-Russian and the Ukrainian working masses, Soviet power in the Ukraine has its own special tasks. One of these special tasks deserves the greatest attention at the present moment. It is the national question, or, in other words, the question of whether the Ukraine is to be a separate and independent Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic bound in alliance (federation) with the Russian Socialist Federative Soviet Republic, or whether the Ukraine is to amalgamate with Russia to form a single Soviet republic. All Bolsheviks and all politically-conscious workers and peasants must give careful thought to this question.

The independence of the Ukraine has been recognised both by the All-Russia Central Executive Committee of the R.S.F.S.R. (Russian Socialist Federative Soviet Republic) and by the Russian Communist Party (Bolsheviks). It is therefore self-evident and generally recognised that only the Ukrainian workers and peasants themselves can and will decide at their All-Ukraine Congress of Soviets whether the Ukraine shall amalgamate with Russia, or whether she shall remain a separate and independent republic, and, in the latter case, what federal ties shall be established between that republic and Russia.

How should this question be decided insofar as concerns the interests of the working people and the promotion of their fight for the complete emancipation of labour from the yoke of capital?

In the first place, the interests of labour demand the fullest confidence and the closest alliance among the working people of different countries and nations. The supporters of the landowners and capitalists, of the bourgeoisie, strive to disunite the workers, to intensify national discord and enmity, in order to weaken the workers and strengthen the power of capital.

Capital is an international force. To vanquish it, an international workers' alliance, an international workers' brotherhood, is needed.

We are opposed to national enmity and discord, to national exclusiveness. We are internationalists. We stand for the close union and the complete amalgamation of the workers and peasants of all nations in a single world Soviet republic.

Secondly, the working people must not forget that capitalism has divided nations into a small number of oppressor. Great-Power (imperialist), sovereign and privileged nations and an overwhelming majority of oppressed, dependent and semi-dependent, non-sovereign nations. The arch-criminal and arch-reactionary war of 1914-18 still further accentuated this division and as a result aggravated rancour and hatred. For centuries the in-

dignation and distrust of the non-sovereign and dependent nations towards the dominant and oppressor nations have been accumulating, of nations such as the Ukrainian towards nations such as the Great-Russian.

We want a *voluntary* union of nations—a union which precludes any coercion of one nation by another—a union founded on complete confidence, on a clear recognition of brotherly unity, on absolutely voluntary consent. Such a union cannot be effected at one stroke; we have to work towards it with the greatest patience and circumspection, so as not to spoil matters and not to arouse distrust, and so that the distrust inherited from centuries of landowner and capitalist oppression centuries of private property and the enmity caused by its divisions and redivisions may have a chance to wear off.

We must, therefore, strive persistently for the unity of nations and ruthlessly suppress everything that tends to divide them, and in doing so we must be very cautious and patient, and make concessions to the survivals of national distrust. We must be adamant and uncompromising towards everything that affects the fundamental interests of labour in its fight for emancipation from the yoke of capital. The question of the demarcation of frontiers now, for the time being—for we are striving towards the complete abolition of frontiers—is a minor one, it is not fundamental or important. In this matter we can afford to wait, and must wait, because the national distrust among the broad mass of peasants and small owners is often extremely tenacious, and haste might only intensify it, in other words, jeopardise the cause of complete and ultimate unity.

The experience of the workers' and peasants' revolution in Russia, the revolution of October-November 1917, and of the two years of victorious struggle against the onslaught of international and Russian capitalists, has made it crystal-clear that the capitalists have succeeded for a time in playing upon the national distrust of the Great Russians felt by Polish, Latvian, Estonian and Finnish peasants and small owners, that they have succeeded for a time in sowing dissension between them and us on the basis of this distrust. Experience has shown that this distrust wears off and disappears only very slowly, and that the more caution and patience displayed by the Great Russians, who have for so long been an oppressor nation, the more certainly this distrust will pass. It is by recognising the independence of the Polish, Latvian, Lithuanian, Estonian and Finnish states that we are slowly but steadily winning the confidence of the labouring masses of the neighbouring small states, who were more backward and more deceived and downtrodden by the capitalists. It is the surest way of wresting them from the influence of "their" national capital-

ists, and leading them to full confidence, to the future united international Soviet republic.

As long as the Ukraine is not completely liberated from Denikin, her government, until the All-Ukraine Congress of Soviets meets, is the All-Ukraine Revolutionary Committee.<sup>102</sup> Besides the Ukrainian Bolshevik Communists, there are Ukrainian *Borotba* Communists<sup>103</sup> working on this Revolutionary Committee as members of the government. One of the things distinguishing the Borotbists from the Bolsheviks is that they insist upon the unconditional independence of the Ukraine. The Bolsheviks will not make *this* a subject of difference and disunity, they do not regard *this* as an obstacle to concerted proletarian effort. There must be unity in the struggle against the yoke of capital and for the dictatorship of the proletariat, and there should be no parting of the ways among Communists on the question of national frontiers, or whether there should be a federal or some other tie between the states. Among the Bolsheviks there are advocates of complete independence for the Ukraine, advocates of a more or less close federal tie, and advocates of the complete amalgamation of the Ukraine with Russia.

There must be no differences over these questions. They will be decided by the All-Ukraine Congress of Soviets.

If a Great-Russian Communist insists upon the amalgamation of the Ukraine with Russia, Ukrainians might easily suspect him of advocating this policy not from the motive of uniting the proletarians in the fight against capital, but because of the prejudices of the old Great-Russian nationalism, of imperialism. Such mistrust is natural, and to a certain degree inevitable and legitimate, because the Great Russians, under the yoke of the landowners and capitalists, had for centuries imbibed the shameful and disgusting prejudices of Great-Russian chauvinism.

If a Ukrainian Communist insists upon the unconditional state independence of the Ukraine, he lays himself open to the suspicion that he is supporting this policy not because of the temporary interests of the Ukrainian workers and peasants in their struggle against the yoke of capital, but on account of the petty-bourgeois national prejudices of the small owner. Experience has provided hundreds of instances of the petty-bourgeois "socialists" of various countries—all the various Polish, Latvian and Lithuanian pseudo-socialists, Georgian Mensheviks, Socialist-Revolutionaries and the like—assuming the guise of supporters of the proletariat for the sole purpose of deceitfully promoting a policy of compromise with "their" national bourgeoisie against the revolutionary workers. We saw this in the case of Kerensky's rule in Russia in the February-October period of 1917, and we have seen it and are seeing it in all other countries.



Mutual distrust between the Great-Russian and Ukrainian Communists can, therefore, arise very easily. How is this distrust to be combated? How is it to be overcome and mutual confidence established?

The best way to achieve this is by working together to uphold the dictatorship of the proletariat and Soviet power in the fight against the landowners and capitalists of all countries and against their attempts to restore their domination. This common fight will clearly show in practice that whatever the decision in regard to state independence or frontiers may be, there must be a close military and economic alliance between the Great-Russian and Ukrainian workers, for otherwise the capitalists of the "Entente", in other words, the alliance of the richest capitalist countries—Britain, France, America, Japan and Italy—will crush and strangle us separately. Our fight against Kolchak and Denikin, whom these capitalists supplied with money and arms, is a clear illustration of this danger.

He who undermines the unity and closest alliance between the Great-Russian and Ukrainian workers and peasants is helping the Kolchaks, the Denikins, the capitalist bandits of all countries.

Consequently, we Great-Russian Communists must repress with the utmost severity the slightest manifestation in our midst of Great-Russian nationalism, for such manifestations, which are a betrayal of communism in general, cause the gravest harm by dividing us from our Ukrainian comrades and thus playing into the hands of Denikin and his regime.

Consequently, we Great-Russian Communists must make concessions when there are differences with the Ukrainian Bolshevik Communists and Borotbists and these differences concern the state independence of the Ukraine, the forms of her alliance with Russia, and the national question in general. But all of us, Great-Russian Communists, Ukrainian Communists, and Communists of any other nation, must be unyielding and irreconcilable in the underlying and fundamental questions which are the same for all nations, in questions of the proletarian struggle, of the proletarian dictatorship; we must not tolerate compromise with the bourgeoisie or any division of the forces which are protecting us against Denikin.

Denikin must be vanquished and destroyed, and such incursions as his not allowed to recur. That is to the fundamental interest of both the Great-Russian and the Ukrainian workers and peasants. The fight will be a long and hard one, for the capitalists of the whole world are helping Denikin and will help all other Denikins.

In this long and hard fight we Great-Russian and Ukrainian workers must maintain the closest alliance, for separately we

shall most definitely be unable to cope with the task. Whatever the boundaries of the Ukraine and Russia may be, whatever may be the forms of their mutual state relationships, that is not so important; that is a matter in which concessions can and should be made, in which one thing, or another, or a third may be tried—the cause of the workers and peasants, of the victory over capitalism, will not perish because of that.

But if we fail to maintain the closest alliance, an alliance against Denikin, an alliance against the capitalists and kulaks of our countries and of all countries, the cause of labour will most certainly perish for many years to come in the sense that the capitalists *will be able* to crush and strangle both the Soviet Ukraine and Soviet Russia.

And what the bourgeoisie of all countries, and all manner of petty-bourgeois parties—i.e., “compromising” parties which permit alliance with the bourgeoisie against the workers—try most of all to accomplish is to disunite the workers of different nationalities, to evoke distrust, and to disrupt a close international alliance and international brotherhood of the workers. Whenever the bourgeoisie succeeds in this the cause of the workers is lost. The Communists of Russia and the Ukraine must therefore by patient, persistent, stubborn and concerted effort foil the nationalist machinations of the bourgeoisie and vanquish nationalist prejudices of every kind, and set the working people of the world an example of a really solid alliance of the workers and peasants of different nations in the fight for Soviet power, for the overthrow of the yoke of the landowners and capitalists, and for a world federal Soviet republic.

*N. Lenin*

December 28, 1919

*Pravda* No. 3, January 4, 1920

*Collected Works*, Vol. 30,  
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## **IN REPLY TO QUESTIONS PUT BY KARL WIEGAND, BERLIN CORRESPONDENT OF UNIVERSAL SERVICE<sup>104</sup>**

### **1. Do we intend to attack Poland and Rumania?**

No. We have declared most emphatically and officially, in the name of the Council of People's Commissars and the All-Russia Central Executive Committee, our peaceful intentions. It is very much to be regretted that the French capitalist government is instigating Poland (and presumably Rumania, too) to attack us. This is even mentioned by a number of American radios from Lyons.

### **2. What are our plans in Asia?**

They are the same as in Europe: peaceful coexistence with all peoples; with the workers and peasants of all nations awakening to a new life—a life without exploiters, without landowners, without capitalists, without merchants. The imperialist war of 1914-18, the war of the capitalists of the Anglo-French (and Russian) group against the German-Austrian capitalist group for the partition of the world, has awakened Asia and has strengthened there, as everywhere else, the urge towards freedom, towards peaceful labour and against possible future wars.

### **3. What would be the basis of peace with America?**

Let the American capitalists leave us alone. We shall not touch them. We are even ready to pay them in gold for any machinery, tools, etc., useful to our transport and industries. We are ready to pay not only in gold, but in raw materials too.

### **4. What are the obstacles to such a peace?**

None on our part; imperialism on the part of the American (and of any other) capitalists.

### **5. What are our views of the deportation of Russian revolutionaries from America?**

We have accepted them. We are not afraid of revolutionaries here in this country. As a matter of fact, we are not afraid of anybody, and if America is afraid of a few more hundred or thousand of its citizens, we are ready to begin negotiations with a view of receiving any citizens whom America thinks dangerous (with the exception of criminals, of course).

6. What possibilities are there of an economic alliance between Russia and Germany?

Unfortunately, they are not great. The Scheidemanns are bad allies. We stand for an alliance with all countries without exception.

7. What are our views upon the allied demand for the extradition of war criminals?

If we are to speak seriously on this matter of war guilt, the guilty ones are the capitalists of all countries. Hand over to us all your landed proprietors owning more than a hundred hectares and capitalists having a capital of more than 100,000 francs, and we shall educate them to useful labour and make them break with the shameful, base and bloody role of exploiters and instigators of wars for the partition of colonies. Wars will then soon become absolutely impossible.

8. What would be the influence of peace with Russia upon the economic conditions in Europe?

Exchange of machinery for grain, flax and other raw materials—I ask, can this be disadvantageous for Europe? Clearly, it cannot be anything but beneficial.

9. What is our opinion regarding the future development of the Soviets as a world force?

The future belongs to the Soviet system all the world over. The facts have proved it. One has only to count by quarterly periods, say, the growth in the number of pamphlets, books, leaflets and newspapers standing for or sympathising with the Soviets published in any country. It cannot be otherwise. Once the workers in the cities, the workers, landless peasants and the handicraftsmen in the villages as well as the small peasants (i.e., those who do not exploit hired labour)—once this enormous majority of working people have understood that the Soviet system gives all power into their hands, releasing them from the yoke of landlords and capitalists—how could one prevent the victory of the Soviet system all over the world? I, for one, do not know of any means of preventing it.

10. Has Russia still to fear counter-revolution from without?

Unfortunately, it has, for the capitalists are stupid, greedy people. They have made a number of such stupid, greedy attempts at intervention and one has to fear repetitions until the workers and peasants of all countries thoroughly *re-educate* their own capitalists.

11. Is Russia ready to enter into business relations with America?

Of course she is ready to do so, and with all other countries. Peace with Estonia, to whom we have conceded a great deal, has proved our readiness, for the sake of business relations, to give even industrial concessions on certain conditions.

February 18, 1920

*V. Ulyanov (N. Lenin)*

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## INTERVIEW WITH LINCOLN EYRE, CORRESPONDENT OF THE AMERICAN NEWSPAPER *THE WORLD*<sup>105</sup>

### ALLIES PLAYING "CHESS GAME"

Of the Allies' reported decision to lift the blockade Lenin said

"It is hard to see sincerity behind so vague a proposal, coupled as it seems to be with preparations to attack us afresh through Poland. At first glance the Supreme Council's proposition looks plausible enough—the resumption of commercial relations through the medium of the Russian co-operatives. But the co-operatives do not any longer exist, having been assimilated into our Soviet distribution organs. Therefore what is meant when the Allies talk of dealing with the co-operatives? Certainly it is not clear.

"Therefore I say that closer examination convinces us that this Paris decision is simply a move in the Allied chess game the motives of which are still obscure."

Lenin paused a moment, then added with a broad grin:

"Far obscurer, for instance, than Marshal Foch's intended visit to Warsaw."

I asked if he deemed the probability of a Polish offensive serious (it must be recalled that in Russia the talk was of a drive by the Poles against the Bolsheviks, not vice versa)

"Beyond doubt," Lenin replied, "Clemenceau and Foch are very, very serious gentlemen, and the one originated and the other is going to carry out this offensive scheme. It is a grave menace, of course, but we have faced graver ones. It does not cause us fear so much as disappointment that the Allies should still pursue the impossible. For a Polish offensive can no more settle the Russian problem for them than did Kolchak's and Denikin's. Poland has many troubles of her own, remember. And it is obvious that she can get no help from any of her neighbours, including Rumania."

"Yet peace seems nearer than before," I suggested.

"Yes, that's true. If peace is a corollary of trade with us, the Allies cannot avoid it much longer. I have heard that Millerand,

Clemenceau's successor, expresses willingness to envisage commercial relations with the Russian people. Perhaps this heralds a change of front among the French capitalists. But Churchill is still strong in England, and Lloyd George, who probably wants to do business with us, dare not risk an open rupture with the political and financial interests supporting the Churchill policy."

## UNITED STATES OPPRESSES SOCIALISTS

"And America?"

"It is hard to see clearly what is going on there. Your bankers seem to fear us more than ever. At any rate, your Government is instituting more violently repressive measures not only against the socialists but against the working class in general than any other government, even the reactionary French. Apparently it is persecuting foreigners. And yet, what would America be without her foreign workers? They are an absolute necessity to your economic development.

"Still, some American manufacturers appear to have begun to realise that making money in Russia is wiser than making war against Russia, which is a good sign. We shall need American manufactures—locomotives, automobiles, etc.—more than those of any other country."

And your peace terms?"

"It is idle to talk further about them," Lenin returned emphatically. "All the world knows that we are prepared to make peace on terms the fairness of which even the most imperialistic capitalists could not dispute. We have reiterated and reiterated our desire for peace, our need for peace and our readiness to give foreign capital the most generous concessions and guarantees. But we do not propose to be strangled to death for the sake of peace.

"I know of no reason why a socialistic commonwealth like ours cannot do business indefinitely with capitalistic countries. We don't mind taking their capitalistic locomotives and farming machinery, so why should they mind taking our socialistic wheat, flax and platinum. Socialistic corn tastes the same as any other corn, does it not? Of course, they will have to have business relations with the dreadful Bolsheviks—that is, the Soviet Government. But it should not be harder for American steel manufacturers, for instance, to deal with the Soviets than it was for them to deal with Entente governments in their war-time munition deals."

## EUROPE DEPENDENT ON RUSSIA

"That is why this talk of reopening trade with Russia through co-operatives seems to us insincere, or at least, obscure—a move in a game of chess rather than a frank, straightforward proposition that would be immediately grasped and acted upon. Moreover, if the Supreme Council really means to lift the blockade, why doesn't it tell us of its intentions? We are without official word from Paris. What little we know is derived from newspaper despatches picked up by our wireless.

"The statesmen of the Entente and the United States do not seem to understand that Russia's present economic distress is simply a part of the world's economic distress. Until the economic problem is faced from a world standpoint and not merely from the standpoint of certain nations or group of nations, a solution is impossible. Without Russia, Europe cannot get on her feet. And with Europe prostrate, America's position becomes critical. What good is America's wealth if she cannot buy with it that which she needs? America cannot eat or wear the gold she has accumulated, can she? She can't trade profitably, that is, on a basis that will be of real value to her, with Europe until Europe is able to give her the things she wants in exchange for that which she has to give. And Europe cannot give her those things until she is on her feet economically."

## WORLD NEEDS RUSSIAN GOODS

"In Russia we have wheat, flax, platinum, potash and many minerals of which the whole world stands in desperate need. The world must come to us or them in the end, Bolshevism or no Bolshevism. There are signs that a realisation of this truth is gradually awakening. But meanwhile not only Russia but all Europe is going to pieces, and the Supreme Council still indulges in tergiversation. Russia can be saved from utter ruin and Europe too, but it must be done soon and quickly. And the Supreme Council is so slow, so very slow. In fact, it has already been dissolved, I believe, in favour of a Council of Ambassadors, leaving nothing settled and with only a League of Nations<sup>106</sup> which is nonexistent, still-born, to take its place. How can the League of Nations possibly come to life without the United States to give it backbone!"

I inquired as to whether the Soviet Government was satisfied with the military situation.

"Very much so," Lenin replied promptly. "The only symptoms of further military aggression against us are those I spoke of in



Poland. If Poland embarks on such an adventure there will be more suffering on both sides, more lives needlessly sacrificed. But even Foch could not give the Poles a victory. They could not defeat our Red Army even if Churchill himself fought with them."

Here Lenin threw back his head and laughed grimly. Then he went on in a graver vein:

"We can be crushed, of course, by any one of the big Allied Powers if they can send their own armies against us. But that they dare not do. The extraordinary paradox is that weak as Russia is compared with the Allies' boundless resources she has not only been able to shatter every armed force, including British, American and French troops that they have managed to send against her, but to win diplomatic and moral victories as well over the cordon sanitaire countries. Finland refused to fight against us. We have peace with Estonia, and peace with Serbia\* and Lithuania<sup>107</sup> is at hand. Despite material inducements offered to and sinister threats made against these small countries by the Entente, they preferred to establish pacific relations with us."

## INTERNAL SITUATION HOPEFUL

"This assuredly demonstrates the tremendous moral force we hold. The Baltic states, our nearest neighbours, appreciate that we alone have no designs against their independence and well-being."

"And Russia's internal situation?"

"It is critical but hopeful. With spring the food shortage will be overcome to the extent at least of saving the cities from famine. There will be sufficient fuel then too. The reconstruction period is under way, thanks to the Red Army's stupendous performances. Now parts of that army are transformed into armies of labour, an extraordinary phenomenon only possible in a country struggling toward a high ideal. Certainly it could not be done in capitalist countries. We have sacrificed everything to victory over our armed antagonists in the past, and now we shall turn all our strength to economic rehabilitation. It will take years, but we shall win out in the end."

"When do you think Communism will be complete in Russia?" The question was a poser, I thought, but Lenin replied immediately:

\* This is a mistake on the part of the newspaper. Serbia was not at war with Soviet Russia. This obviously refers to Latvia.—*Ed.*

"We mean to electrify our entire industrial system through power stations in the Urals and elsewhere. Our engineers tell us it will take ten years. When the electrification is accomplished it will be the first important stage on the road to the communistic administration of public economic life. All our industries will receive their motive power from a common source, capable of supplying them all adequately. This will eliminate wasteful competition in the quest of fuel, and place manufacturing enterprise on a sound economic footing, without which we cannot hope to achieve a full measure of interchange of essential products in accordance with Communist principles.

"Incidentally, in three years we expect to have 50,000,000 incandescent lamps burning in Russia. There are 70,000,000 in the United States, I believe, but in a land where electricity is in its infancy more than two-thirds of that number is a very high figure to achieve. Electrification is to my mind the most momentous of the great tasks that confront us."

#### SCORES SOCIALIST LEADERS

At the close of our talk Lenin delivered himself, not for publication, however, of some cutting criticism of certain Socialist leaders in Europe and America which revealed his lack of faith in the ability or even desire of these gentry to promote world revolution effectively. He evidently feels that Bolshevism will come to pass in spite of, rather than because of, the "official" chieftains of Socialism.

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## ***NINTH CONGRESS OF THE R.C.P.(B.)***

**MARCH 29-APRIL 5, 1920**

### **REPORT OF THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE MARCH 29**

Comrades, before beginning my report I must say that, like the report at the preceding Congress, it is divided into two parts: political and organisational. This division first of all leads one to think of the way the work of the Central Committee has developed in its external aspect, the organisational aspect. Our Party has now been through its first year without Y. M. Sverdlov, and our loss was bound to tell on the whole organisation of the Central Committee. No one has been able to combine organisational and political work in one person so successfully as Comrade Sverdlov did and we have been obliged to attempt to replace his work by the work of a collegium.

During the year under review the current daily work of the Central Committee has been conducted by the two collegiums elected by the plenary meeting of the Central Committee—the Organising Bureau of the Central Committee and the Political Bureau of the Central Committee.<sup>108</sup> In order to achieve co-ordination and consistency in the decisions of these two bodies, the Secretary was a member of both. In practice it has become the main and proper function of the Organising Bureau to distribute the forces of the Party, and that of the Political Bureau to deal with political questions. It goes without saying that this distinction is to a certain extent artificial; it is obvious that no policy can be carried out in practice without finding expression in appointments and transfers. Consequently, every organisational question assumes a political significance; and it has become the established practice for the request of a single member of the Central Committee to be sufficient to have any question, for one reason or another, examined as a political question. To have attempted to divide the functions of the Central Committee in any other way would hardly have been expedient and in practice would hardly have achieved its purpose.

This method of conducting business has produced extremely good results: no difficulties have arisen between the two bureaux on any occasion. The work of these bodies has on the whole proceeded harmoniously, and practical implementation has been facilitated by the presence of the Secretary who acted, furthermore, solely and exclusively in pursuance of the will of the Central Committee. It must be emphasised from the very outset, so as to remove all misunderstanding, that only the corporate decisions of the Central Committee adopted in the Organising Bureau or the Political Bureau, or by a plenary meeting of the Central Committee—only these decisions were carried out by the Secretary of the Central Committee of the Party. The work of the Central Committee cannot otherwise proceed properly.

After these brief remarks on the arrangement of work within the Central Committee, I shall get on with my job, which is the report of the Central Committee. To present a report on the political work of the Central Committee is a highly difficult task if understood literally. A large part of the work of the Political Bureau has this year consisted in making the current decision on the various questions of policy that have arisen, questions of co-ordinating the activities of all the Soviet and Party institutions and all organisations of the working class, of co-ordinating and doing their utmost to direct the work of the entire Soviet Republic. The Political Bureau adopted decisions on all questions of foreign and domestic policy. Naturally, to attempt to enumerate these questions, even approximately, would be impossible. You will find material for a general summary<sup>109</sup> in the printed matter prepared by the Central Committee for this Congress. To attempt to repeat this summary in my report would be beyond my powers, and I do not think it would be interesting to the delegates. All of us who work in a Party or Soviet organisation keep daily track of the extraordinary succession of political questions, both foreign and domestic. The way these questions have been decided, as expressed in the decrees of the Soviet government, and in the activities of the Party organisations, at every turn, is in itself an evaluation of the Central Committee of the Party. It must be said that the questions were so numerous that they frequently had to be decided under conditions of extreme haste, and it was only because the members of the body concerned were so well acquainted with each other, knew every shade of opinion and had confidence in each other, that this work could be done at all. Otherwise it would have been beyond the powers of a body even three times the size. When deciding complex questions it frequently happened that meetings had to be replaced by telephone conversations. This was done in the full assurance that obviously complicated and disputed questions would not be overlooked. Now,

when I am called upon to make a general report, instead of giving a chronological review and a grouping of subjects, I shall take the liberty of dwelling on the main and most essential points, such, moreover, as link up the experience of yesterday, or, more correctly, of the past year, with the tasks that now confront us.

The time is not yet ripe for a history of Soviet government. And even if it were, I must say for myself—and I think for the Central Committee as well—that we have no intention of becoming historians. What interests us is the present and the future. We take the past year under review as material, as a lesson, as a stepping-stone, from which we must proceed further. Regarded from this point of view, the work of the Central Committee falls into two big categories—work connected with war problems and those determining the international position of the Republic, and work of internal, peace-time economic development, which only began to come to the fore at the end of the last year, perhaps, or the beginning of this year, when it became quite clear that we had won a decisive victory on the decisive fronts of the Civil War. Last spring our military situation was an extremely difficult one; as you remember, we were still to experience quite a number of defeats, of new, huge and unexpected offensives on the part of the counter-revolution and the Entente, none of which could have been anticipated by us. It was therefore only natural that the greater part of this period was devoted to the military problem, the problem of the Civil War, which seemed unsolvable to all the faint-hearted, not to speak of the parties of the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries and other petty-bourgeois democrats, and to all the intermediate elements; this induced them to declare quite sincerely that the problem could not be solved, that Russia was backward and enfeebled and could not vanquish the capitalist system of the entire world, seeing that the revolution in the West had been delayed. And we therefore had to maintain our position and to declare with absolute firmness and conviction that we would win, we had to implement the slogans "Everything for victory!" and "Everything for the war!"

To carry out these slogans it was necessary to deliberately and openly leave some of the most essential needs unsatisfied, and time and again to deny assistance to many, in the conviction that all forces had to be concentrated on the war, and that we had to win the war which the Entente had forced upon us. It was only because of the Party's vigilance and its strict discipline, because the authority of the Party united all government departments and institutions, because the slogans issued by the Central Committee were adopted by tens, hundreds, thousands and finally millions of people as one man, because incredible sacrifices were made—it was only because of all this that the miracle which occurred was

made possible. It was only because of all this that we were able to win in spite of the campaigns of the imperialists of the Entente and of the whole world having been repeated twice, thrice and even four times. And, of course, we not only stress this aspect of the matter; we must also bear in mind that it teaches us that without discipline and centralisation we would never have accomplished this task. The incredible sacrifices that we have made in order to save the country from counter-revolution and in order to ensure the victory of the Russian revolution over Denikin, Yudenich and Kolchak are a guarantee of the world social revolution. To achieve this, we had to have Party discipline, the strictest centralisation and the absolute certainty that the untold sacrifices of tens and hundreds of thousands of people would help us to accomplish all these tasks, and that it really could be done, could be accomplished. And for this purpose it was essential that our Party and the class which is exercising the dictatorship, the working class, should serve as elements uniting millions upon millions of working people in Russia and all over the world.

If we give some thought to what, after all, was the underlying reason for this historical miracle, why a weak, exhausted and backward country was able to defeat the most powerful countries in the world, we shall find that it was centralisation, discipline and unparalleled self-sacrifice. On what basis? Millions of working people in a country that was anything but educated could achieve this organisation, discipline and centralisation only because the workers had passed through the school of capitalism and had been united by capitalism, because the proletariat in all the advanced countries has united—and united the more, the more advanced the country; and on the other hand, because property, capitalist property, small property under commodity production, disunites. Property disunites, whereas we are uniting, and increasingly uniting, millions of working people all over the world. This is now clear even to the blind, one might say, or at least to those who will not see. Our enemies grew more and more disunited as time went on. They were disunited by capitalist property by private property under commodity production, whether they were small proprietors who profited by selling surplus grain at exorbitant prices and enriched themselves at the expense of the starving workers, or the capitalists of the various countries, even though they possessed military might and were creating a League of Nations, a "great united league" of all the foremost nations of the world. Unity of this kind is a sheer fiction, a sheer fraud, a sheer lie. And we have seen—and this was a great example—that this notorious League of Nations, which attempted to hand out mandates for the government of states, to divide up the world—that this notorious alliance proved to be a soap-bubble which at

once burst, because it was an alliance founded on capitalist property. We have seen this on a vast historical scale, and it confirms that fundamental truth which told us that our cause was just, that the victory of the October Revolution was absolutely certain, and that the cause we were embarking on was one to which, despite all difficulties and obstacles, millions and millions of working people in all countries would rally. We knew that we had allies, that it was only necessary for the one country to which history had presented this honourable and most difficult task to display a spirit of self-sacrifice, for these incredible sacrifices to be repaid a hundredfold—every month we held out in our country would win us millions and millions of allies in all countries of the world.

If, after all, we give some thought to the reason we were able to win, were bound to win, we shall find that it was only because all our enemies—who were formally tied by all sorts of bonds to the most powerful governments and capitalists in the world—however united they may have been formally, actually turned out to be disunited. Their internal bond in fact disunited them, pitted them against each other. Capitalist property disintegrated them, transformed them from allies into savage beasts, so that they failed to see that Soviet Russia was increasing the number of her followers among the British soldiers who had been landed in Archangel, among the French sailors in Sevastopol, among the workers of all countries, of all the advanced countries without exception, where the social-compromisers took the side of capital. In the final analysis this was the fundamental reason, the underlying reason, that made our victory certain and which is still the chief, insuperable and inexhaustible source of our strength; and it permits us to affirm that when we in our country achieve the dictatorship of the proletariat in full measure, and the maximum unity of its forces, through its vanguard, its advanced party, we may expect the world revolution. And this in fact is an expression of will, an expression of the proletarian determination to fight; it is an expression of the proletarian determination to achieve an alliance of millions upon millions of workers of all countries.

The bourgeoisie and the pseudo-socialist gentry of the Second International have declared this to be mere propagandist talk. But it is not, it is historical reality, borne out by the bloody and painful experience of the Civil War in Russia. For this Civil War was a war against world capital; and world capital disintegrated of itself, devoured itself, amidst strife, whereas we, in a country where the proletariat was perishing from hunger and typhus, emerged more hardened and stronger than ever. In this country we won the support of increasing numbers of working people.

What the compromisers formerly regarded as propagandist talk and the bourgeoisie were accustomed to sneer at, has been transformed in these years of our revolution, and particularly in the year under review, into an absolute and indisputable historical fact, which enables us to say with the most positive conviction that our having accomplished this is evidence that we possess a world-wide basis, immeasurably wider than was the case in any previous revolution. We have an international alliance, an alliance which has nowhere been registered, which has never been given formal embodiment, which from the point of view of "constitutional law" means nothing, but which, in the disintegrating capitalist world, actually means everything. Every month that we gained positions, or merely held out against an incredibly powerful enemy, proved to the whole world that we were right and brought us millions of new supporters.

This process has been a difficult one; it has been accompanied by tremendous defeats. In this very year under review the monstrous White terror in Finland<sup>110</sup> was followed by the defeat of the Hungarian revolution, which was stifled by the governments of the Entente countries that deceived their parliaments and concluded a secret treaty with Rumania.

It was the vilest piece of treachery, this conspiracy of the international Entente to crush the Hungarian revolution by means of a White terror, not to mention the fact that in order to strangle the German revolution they were ready for any understanding with the German compromisers, and that these people, who had declared Liebknecht to be an honest German, pounced on this honest German like mad dogs together with the German imperialists. They exceeded all conceivable bounds; but every such act of suppression on their part only strengthened and consolidated us, while it undermined them.

And it seems to me that we must first and foremost draw a lesson from this fundamental experience. Here we must make a special point of basing our agitation and propaganda on an analysis, an explanation of why we were victorious, why the sacrifices made in the Civil War have been repaid a hundredfold, and how we must act on the basis of this experience in order to succeed in another war, a war on a bloodless front, a war which has only changed its form, but which is being waged against us by those same representatives, lackeys and leaders of the old capitalist world, only still more vigorously, still more furiously, still more zealously. More than any other, our revolution has proved the rule that the strength of a revolution, the vigour of its assault, its energy, determination, its victory and its triumph intensify the resistance of the bourgeoisie. The more victorious we are the more the capitalist exploiters learn to unite and the more determined their onslaught.



For, as you all distinctly remember—it was not so long ago when judged by the passage of time, but a long time ago when judged by the march of events—at the beginning of the October Revolution Bolshevism was regarded as a freak; this view, which was a reflection of the feeble development and weakness of the proletarian revolution, very soon had to be abandoned in Russia and has now been abandoned in Europe as well. Bolshevism has become a world-wide phenomenon, the workers' revolution has raised its head. The Soviet system, in creating which in October we followed the traditions of 1905, developing our own experience—this Soviet system has become a phenomenon of world-historic importance.

Two camps are now quite consciously facing each other all over the world; this may be said without the slightest exaggeration. It should be noted that only this year have they become locked in a decisive and final struggle. And now, at the time of this very Congress, we are passing through what is perhaps one of the greatest, most acute but not yet completed periods of transition from war to peace.

You all know what happened to the leaders of the imperialist powers of the Entente who loudly announced to the whole world: "We shall never stop fighting those usurpers, those bandits, those arrogant of power, those enemies of democracy, those Bolsheviks"—you know that first they lifted the blockade, that their attempt to unite the small states failed, because we succeeded in winning over not only the workers of all countries, but also the bourgeoisie of the small countries, for the imperialists oppress not only the workers of their own countries but the bourgeoisie of the small states as well. You know that we won over the vacillating bourgeoisie in the advanced countries. And the present position is that the Entente is breaking its former promises and assurances and is violating the treaties which, incidentally, it concluded dozens of times with various Russian whiteguards. And now, as far as these treaties are concerned, the Entente is the loser, for it squandered hundreds of millions on them but failed to complete the job.

It has now lifted the blockade and has virtually begun peace negotiations with the Soviet Republic. But it is not completing these negotiations, and therefore the small states have lost faith in it and in its might. So we see that the position of the Entente, its position in foreign affairs, defies all definition from the standpoint of the customary concepts of law. The states of the Entente are neither at peace with the Bolsheviks nor at war with them; they have recognised us and they have not recognised us. And this utter confusion among our opponents, who were so convinced that they represented something, proves that they represent

nothing but a pack of capitalist beasts who have fallen out among themselves and are absolutely incapable of doing us any harm.

The position today is that Latvia has officially made peace proposals. Finland has sent a telegram which officially speaks of a demarcation line but actually implies a swing to a policy of peace.<sup>111</sup> Lastly, Poland, the Poland whose representatives have been, and still are, sabre-rattling so vigorously, the Poland that has been, and still is, receiving so many trainloads of artillery and promises of help in everything, if only she would continue the war with Russia—even Poland, the unstable position of whose government compels her to consent to any military gamble, has invited us to begin negotiations for peace.<sup>112</sup> We must be extremely cautious. Our policy demands the most careful thought. Here it is hardest of all to find the proper policy, for nobody as yet knows on what track the train is standing; the enemy himself does not know what he is going to do next. The gentlemen who represent French policy and who are most zealous in egging Poland on, and the leaders of landowner and bourgeois Poland do not know what will happen next; they do not know what they want. Today they say, "Gentlemen, let us have a few trainloads of guns and a few hundred millions and we are prepared to fight the Bolsheviks." They are hushing up the news of the strikes that are spreading in Poland; they are tightening up the censorship so as to conceal the truth. But the revolutionary movement in Poland is growing. The spread of revolution in Germany, in its new phase, in its new stage, now that the workers, after the German Kornilov-type putsch,<sup>113</sup> are creating Red Armies, plainly shows (as can be seen from the recent dispatches from Germany) that the temper of the workers is rising more and more. The Polish bourgeoisie and landowners are themselves beginning to wonder whether it is not too late, whether there will not be a Soviet Republic in Poland before the government acts either for war or for peace. They do not know what to do. They do not know what the morrow will bring.

But we know that our forces are growing vastly every month and will grow even more in future. The result is that our international position is now more stable than ever. But we must watch the international crisis with extreme care and be prepared for any eventuality. We have received a formal offer of peace from Poland. These gentlemen are in desperate straits, so desperate that their friends, the German monarchists, people with better training and more political experience and knowledge, plunged into a venturesome gamble, a Kornilov-type putsch. The Polish bourgeoisie are throwing out offers of peace because they know that any venturesome gamble may prove to be a Polish Kornilov-type affair. Knowing that our enemy is in desperate straits, that

our enemy does not know what he wants to do or what he will do tomorrow, we must tell ourselves quite definitely that in spite of the peace overtures war is possible. It is impossible to foretell what their future conduct will be. We have seen these people before, we know these Kerenskys, these Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries. During the past two years we have seen them one day drawn towards Kolchak, the next day almost towards the Bolsheviks, and then towards Denikin—and all this camouflaged by talk about freedom and democracy. We know these gentlemen, and therefore we grasp at the proposal of peace with both hands and are prepared to make the maximum concessions, in the conviction that the conclusion of peace with the small states will further our cause infinitely more than war. For the imperialists used war to deceive the working masses, they used it to conceal the truth about Soviet Russia. Any peace, therefore, will open channels for our influence a hundred times wider, which, as it is, has grown considerably in these past few years. The Third, Communist International has achieved unparalleled successes. But at the same time we know that war may be forced upon us any day. Our enemies do not themselves know as yet what they are capable of doing in this respect.

That war preparations are under way, of that there is not the slightest doubt. Many of the states bordering on Russia—and perhaps many of those not bordering on Russia—are now arming. That is why we must manoeuvre so flexibly in our international policy and adhere so firmly to the course we have taken, that is why we must be prepared for anything. We have waged the war for peace with extreme vigour. This war is yielding splendid results. We have made a very good showing in this sphere of the struggle, at any rate, not inferior to the showing made by the Red Army on the front where blood is being shed. But the conclusion of peace with us does not depend on the will of the small states even if they desire it. They are up to their ears in debt to the countries of the Entente, who are wrangling and competing desperately among themselves. We must therefore remember that peace is of course possible from the point of view of the world situation, the historical situation created by the Civil War and by the war against the Entente.

But the measures we take for peace must be accompanied by intensified preparedness for defence, and in no case must our army be disarmed. Our army offers a real guarantee that the imperialist powers will not make the slightest attempt or encroachment on us; for although they might count on certain ephemeral successes at first, not one of them would escape defeat at the hands of Soviet Russia. That we must realise, that must be made the basis of our agitation and propaganda, that is what we must

prepare for, in order to solve the problem which, in view of our growing fatigue, compels us to combine the one with the other.

I now pass to those important considerations of principle which induced us to direct the working masses so resolutely along the lines of using the army for the solution of certain basic and immediate problems. The old source of discipline, capital, has been weakened, the old source of unity has disappeared. We must create a different kind of discipline, a different source of discipline and unity. Coercion evokes the indignation, the howls, the yells and outcries of the bourgeois democrats, who make great play of the words "freedom" and "equality", but do not understand that freedom for capital is a crime against the working people, that equality between the rich and the destitute is a crime against the working people. In our fight against falsehood, we introduced labour conscription and proceeded to unite the working people, not hesitating to use coercion. For no revolution has ever been effected without coercion, and the proletariat has a right to exercise coercion in order to hold its own at all costs. When those gentry, the bourgeois, the compromisers, the German Independents, the Austrian Independents, and the French Louguetists,<sup>114</sup> argued about the historical factor, they always forgot such a factor as the revolutionary determination, firmness and steadfastness of the proletariat. And that factor is precisely the steadfastness and firmness of the proletariat of our country, which declares, and has proved by its deeds, that we are prepared to perish to a man rather than yield our territory, rather than yield our principle, the principle of discipline and firm policy, for the sake of which everything else must be sacrificed. At the time when the capitalist countries and the capitalist class are disintegrating, at this moment of crisis and despair, this political factor is the only decisive one. Talk about minority and majority, about democracy and freedom decides nothing, however much the heroes of a past historical period may invoke them. It is the class-consciousness and firmness of the working class that count here. If the working class is prepared to make sacrifices, if it shows that it is able to strain every nerve, the problem will be solved. Everything must be directed to the solution of this problem. The determination of the working class, its inflexible adherence to the watchword "Death rather than surrender!" is not only a historical factor, it is the decisive, the winning factor.

We are now going over from this victory and this conviction to problems of peaceful economic development, the solution of which is the chief function of our Congress. In this respect we cannot, in my opinion, speak of a report of the Political Bureau of the Central Committee, or, rather, of a political report of the

Central Committee. We must say frankly and bluntly that this, comrades, is a question which you must decide, which you must weigh with all your authority as the supreme Party body. We have laid the question before you quite clearly. We have taken up a definite stand. It is your duty finally to endorse, correct or amend our decision. But in its report the Central Committee must say that on this fundamental and urgent question it has adopted an absolutely definite stand. Yes, the thing now is to apply to the peaceful work of economic development, to the restoration of our shattered industry, everything that can weld the proletariat into an absolute unity. Here we need the iron discipline, the iron system, without which we could not have held on for two months. Let alone over two years. We must be able to utilise our success. On the other hand, it must be realised that this transition will demand many sacrifices, of which the country has already made so many.

On the principle involved the Central Committee was quite clear. Our activities were entirely governed by this policy and conducted in this spirit. Take, for example, the question of corporate management versus individual management, which you will have to settle—a question which may appear to be a subsidiary one, and which in itself, if torn from its context, cannot of course claim to be a fundamental question of principle. This question should be examined only from the point of view of our basic knowledge, experience and revolutionary practice. For instance, we are told that “corporate management is one of the forms in which the masses participate in the work of administration”. But we on the Central Committee discussed this question and took our decision, which we have to report to you—comrades, such theoretical confusion cannot be tolerated. Had we permitted a tenth part of this theoretical confusion in the fundamental question of our military activities, of our Civil War, we would have been beaten, and would have deserved to be beaten.

Permit me, comrades, in connection with the report of the Central Committee and with this question of whether the new class should participate in the work of administration on a corporate or an individual basis, to introduce a little bit of theory, to point out how a class governs and what class domination actually is. After all, we are not novices in these matters, and what distinguishes our revolution from former revolutions is that there is nothing utopian about it. The new class, having replaced the old class, can maintain itself only by a desperate struggle against other classes; and it will finally triumph only if it can bring about the abolition of classes in general. That is what the vast and complex process of the class struggle demands; otherwise you will sink into a morass of confusion. What is class domination? In what

way did the bourgeoisie dominate over the feudal lords? The Constitution spoke of freedom and equality. That was a lie. As long as there are working men, property-owners are in a position to profiteer, and indeed, as property-owners, are compelled to profiteer. We declare that there is no equality, that the well-fed man is not the equal of the hungry man, that the profiteer is not the equal of the working man.

How is class domination expressed today? The domination of the proletariat consists in the fact that the landowners and capitalists have been deprived of their property. The spirit and basic idea of all previous constitutions, even the most republican and democratic, amounted to one thing—property. Our Constitution has the right, has won itself the right, to a place in history by virtue of the fact that the abolition of property is not confined to a paper declaration. The victorious proletariat has abolished property, has completely annulled it—and therein lies its domination as a class. The prime thing is the question of property. As soon as the question of property was settled practically, the domination of the class was assured. When, after that, the Constitution recorded on paper what had been actually effected, namely, the abolition of capitalist and landed property, and added that under the Constitution the working class enjoys more rights than the peasantry, while exploiters have no rights whatever—that was a record of the fact that we had established the domination of our class, thereby binding to ourselves all sections and all small groups of working people.

The petty-bourgeois property-owners are disunited; those who have more property are the enemies of those who have less property; and the proletarians, by abolishing property, have declared open war on them. There are still many unenlightened and ignorant people who are wholly in favour of any kind of freedom of trade, but who cannot fight when they see the discipline and self-sacrifice displayed in securing victory over the exploiters; they are not with us, but are powerless to come out against us. It is only the domination of a class that determines property relations and which class is to be on top. Those who, as we so frequently observe, associate the question of the nature of class domination with the question of democratic centralism create such confusion that all successful work on this basis becomes impossible. Clarity in propaganda and agitation is a fundamental condition. When our enemies said and admitted that we had performed miracles in developing agitation and propaganda, that was not to be understood in the superficial sense that we had large numbers of agitators and used up large quantities of paper, but in the intrinsic sense that the truth contained in that propaganda penetrated to the minds of all; there is no escaping from that truth.

Whenever classes displaced each other, they changed property relations. When the bourgeoisie superseded the feudals, it changed property relations; the Constitution of the bourgeoisie says: "The man of property is the equal of the beggar." That was bourgeois freedom. This kind of "equality" ensured the domination of the capitalist class in the state. But do you think that when the bourgeoisie superseded the feudals they confused the state with the administration? No, they were no such fools. They declared that the work of administration required people who knew how to administer, and that they would adapt feudal administrators for that purpose. And that is what they did. Was it a mistake? No, comrades, the art of administration does not descend from heaven, it is not inspired by the Holy Ghost. And the fact that a class is the leading class does not make it at once capable of administering. We have an example of this: while the bourgeoisie were establishing their victory they took for the work of administration members of another class, the feudal class; there was nowhere else to get them from. We must be sober and face the facts. The bourgeoisie had recourse to the old class; and we, too, are now confronted with the task of taking the knowledge and training of the old class, subordinating it to our needs, and using it all for the success of our class. We, therefore, say that the victorious class must be mature, and maturity is attested not by a document or certificate, but by experience and practice.

When the bourgeoisie triumphed, they did not know how to administer; and they made sure of their victory by proclaiming a new constitution and by recruiting, enlisting administrators from their own class and training them, utilising for this purpose administrators of the old class. They began to train their own new administrators, fitting them for the work with the help of the whole machinery of state; they sequestered the feudal institutions and admitted only the wealthy to the schools; and in this way, in the course of many years and decades, they trained administrators from their own class. Today, in a state which is constructed on the pattern and in the image of the dominant class, we must act as every state has acted. If we do not want to be guilty of sheer utopianism and meaningless phrase-mongering, we must say that we must take into account the experience of the past; that we must safeguard the Constitution won by the revolution, but that for the work of administration, of organising the state, we need people who are versed in the art of administration, who have state and business experience, and that there is nowhere we can turn to for such people except the old class.

Opinions on corporate management are all too frequently imbued with a spirit of sheer ignorance, a spirit of opposition to the specialists. We shall never succeed with such a spirit. In order to

succeed we must understand the history of the old bourgeois world in all its profundity; and in order to build communism we must take technology and science and make them available to wider circles. And we can take them only from the bourgeoisie—there is nowhere else to get them from. Prominence must be given to this fundamental question, it must be treated as one of the basic problems of economic development. We have to administer with the help of people belonging to the class we have overthrown; they are imbued with the prejudices of their class and we must re-educate them. At the same time we must recruit our own administrators from our own class. We must use the entire machinery of state to put the schools, adult education, and all practical training at the service of the proletarians, the factory workers and the labouring peasants, under the guidance of the Communists.

That is the only way to get things going. After our two years' experience we cannot argue as though we were only just setting about the work of socialist construction. We committed follies enough in and around the Smolny period. That is nothing to be ashamed of. How were we to know, seeing that we were undertaking something absolutely new? We first tried one way, then another. We swam with the current, because it was impossible to distinguish the right from the wrong; that requires time. Now that is all a matter of the recent past, which we have got beyond. That past, in which chaos and enthusiasm prevailed, is now over. One document from that past is the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk. It is a historic document—more, it was a period of history. The Treaty of Brest-Litovsk was forced upon us because we were helpless in every way. What sort of period was it? It was a period of impotence, from which we emerged victorious. It was a period in which corporate management was universal. You cannot escape that historical fact by declaring that corporate management is a school of administration. You cannot stay for ever in the preparatory class of a school! (*Applause.*) That will not do. We are grown-up now, and we shall be beaten and beaten again in every field if we behave like schoolboys. We must push forward. We must push higher with energy and unanimity of will. Tremendous difficulties face the trade unions. We must get them to regard this task in the spirit of the fight against the survivals of the celebrated democracy. All these outcries against appointees, all this old and dangerous rubbish which finds its way into various resolutions and conversations must be swept away. Otherwise we cannot succeed. If we have failed to master this lesson in these two years, we are lagging, and those who lag, get beaten.

The task is an extremely difficult one. Our trade unions have been of tremendous assistance in building the proletarian state.



They were a link between the Party and the unenlightened millions. Let us not close our eyes to the fact that the trade unions bore the brunt of the struggle against all our troubles when the state needed help in food work. Was this not a tremendous task? The recent issue of the *Bulletin of the Central Statistical Board* contains summaries by statisticians who certainly cannot be suspected of Bolshevism. Two interesting figures are given: in 1918 and 1919 the workers in the consuming gubernias received seven poods a year, while the peasants in the producing gubernias consumed seventeen poods a year. Before the war they used to consume sixteen poods a year. There you have two figures illustrating the relation of classes in the struggle for food. The proletariat continued to make sacrifices. People shout about coercion! But the proletariat justified and legitimatised coercion; it justified it by making the greatest sacrifices. The majority of the population, the peasants of the producing gubernias of our starving and impoverished Russia, for the first time had more food than throughout the centuries of tsarist and capitalist Russia. And we say that the masses will go on starving until the Red Army is victorious. The vanguard of the working class had to make this sacrifice. This struggle is a school; but when we leave this school we must go forward. This step must now be taken at all costs. Like all trade unions, the old trade unions have a history and a past. In the past they were organs of resistance to those who oppressed labour, to capitalism. But now that their class has become the governing class, and is being called upon to make great sacrifices, to starve and to perish, the situation has changed.

Not everybody understands this change, not everybody grasps its significance. And certain Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries who are demanding that corporate management be substituted for individual management have helped us in this matter. No, comrades, that won't work. We have got beyond that. We are now faced with a very difficult task; having gained victory on the bloody front, we must now gain victory on the bloodless front. This war is a more difficult one. This front is the most arduous. We say this frankly to all class-conscious workers. The war which we have withstood at the front must be followed by a bloodless war. The fact is that the more we were victorious, the more regions we secured like Siberia, the Ukraine and the Kuban. In those regions there are rich peasants; there are no proletarians, and what proletariat there is, has been corrupted by petty-bourgeois habits. We know that everybody who has a piece of land in those parts says: "A fig for the government, I'll get all I can out of the starving. A fat lot I care for the government." The peasant profiteer who, when left to the tender mercies of Denikin, was swinging towards us will now be aided by the Entente. The war has changed

its front and its forms. It is now taking the form of trade, of food profiteering, which it has made international. In Comrade Kamev's theses published in the *Bulletin of the C.C., R.C.P.(B.)*<sup>115</sup> the underlying principles are stated fully. They want to make food profiteering international. They want to turn peaceful economic development into the peaceful disintegration of Soviet power. No you don't, my imperialist gentlemen! We are on our guard. We declare: we have fought and won, and we shall therefore retain as our basic slogan the one which helped us to victory; we shall fully preserve that slogan and apply it to the field of labour. That slogan is the firmness and unity of will of the proletariat. The old prejudices, the old habits that still remain, must be discarded.

I should like, in conclusion, to dwell on Comrade Gusev's pamphlet, which in my opinion deserves attention for two reasons. It is a good pamphlet not only from the formal standpoint, not only because it has been written for our Congress. Somehow, up to now we have all been accustomed to writing resolutions. They say that all literature is good except tedious literature. Resolutions, I take it, should be classed as tedious literature. It would be better if we followed Comrade Gusev's example and wrote fewer resolutions and more pamphlets, even though they bristled with errors as his does. The pamphlet is good in spite of these errors, because it centres attention on a fundamental economic plan for the restoration of industry and production throughout the country, and because it subordinates everything to this fundamental economic plan. The Central Committee has introduced into the theses distributed today a whole paragraph taken entirely from Comrade Gusev's theses. This fundamental economic plan can be worked out in greater detail with the help of experts. We must remember that the plan is designed for many years to come. We do not promise to deliver the country from hunger all at once. We say that the struggle will be much harder than the one on the war front. But it is a struggle that interests us more; it brings us nearer to our immediate and main tasks. It demands that maximum exertion of effort and that unity of will which we have displayed before and must display now. If we accomplish this, we shall gain no less a victory on the bloodless front than on the front of civil war. (*Applause.*)

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## FROM THE DESTRUCTION OF THE OLD SOCIAL SYSTEM TO THE CREATION OF THE NEW

Our newspaper<sup>116</sup> is devoted to the problem of communist labour.

This is the paramount problem in the building of socialism. First of all, we must make it quite clear to ourselves that this question *could* be raised in a practical way only after the proletariat had captured political power, only after the landowners and capitalists had been expropriated, only after the proletariat, having captured state power, had achieved decisive victories over the exploiters who put up a desperate resistance and organised counter-revolutionary rebellions and civil war.

It seemed that the time had arrived early in 1918—and it had indeed arrived after the February (1918) military campaign of German imperialism against Russia. But on that occasion the period was so short-lived, a new and more powerful wave of counter-revolutionary rebellions and invasions swept over us so quickly, that the Soviet government had no opportunity to devote itself at all closely and persistently to problems of peaceful development.

We have now passed through two years of unprecedented and incredible difficulties, two years of famine, privation, and distress, accompanied by the unprecedented victories of the Red Army over the hordes of international capitalist reaction.

Today there are serious grounds for hoping (if the French capitalists do not incite Poland to make war on us) that we shall get a more durable and lasting peace.

During these two years we have acquired some experience in organisation on the basis of socialism. That is why we can, and should, get right down to the problem of communist labour, or rather, it would be more correct to say, not communist, but socialist labour; for we are dealing not with the higher, but the lower, the primary stage of development of the new social system that is growing out of capitalism.





Communist labour in the narrower and stricter sense of the term is labour performed gratis for the benefit of society, labour performed not as a definite duty, not for the purpose of obtaining a right to certain products, not according to previously established and legally fixed quotas, but voluntary labour, irrespective of quotas; it is labour performed without expectation of reward, without reward as a condition, labour performed because it has become a habit to work for the common good, and because of a conscious realisation (that has become a habit) of the necessity of working for the common good—labour as the requirement of a healthy organism.

It must be clear to everybody that we, i.e., our society, our social system, are still a very long way from the application of *this* form of labour on a broad, really mass scale.

But the very fact that this question has been raised, and raised both by the whole of the advanced proletariat (the Communist Party and the trade unions) and by the state authorities, is a step in this direction.

To achieve big things we must start with little things.

On the other hand, after the "big things", after the revolution which overthrew capitalist ownership and placed the proletariat in power, the organisation of economic life on the *new* basis *can* only start from *little* things.

Subbotniks, labour armies, labour conscription—these are the practical realisation of socialist and communist labour in various forms.

This practical realisation still suffers from numerous defects. Only people who are totally incapable of thinking, if we leave aside the champions of capitalism, can laugh scornfully (or rage) at them.

Defects, mistakes, blunders in such a new, difficult and great undertaking are inevitable. Those who are afraid of the difficulties of building socialism, those who allow themselves to be scared by them, those who give way to despair or cowardly dismay, are no socialists.

It will take many years, decades, to create a new labour discipline, new forms of social ties between people, and new forms and methods of drawing people into labour.

It is a most gratifying and noble work.

It is our good fortune that, by overthrowing the bourgeoisie and suppressing its resistance, we have been able to win the ground on which this work *has become possible*.

And we will set about this work with all our might. Perseverance, persistence, willingness, determination and ability to test things a hundred times, to correct them a hundred times, but to achieve the goal come what may—these are qualities

which the proletariat acquired in the course of the ten, fifteen or twenty years that preceded the October Revolution, and which it has acquired in the two years that have passed since this revolution, years of unprecedented privation, hunger, ruin and destitution. These qualities of the proletariat are a guarantee that the proletariat will conquer.

April 8, 1920

*Kommunistichesky Subbotnik*, April 11,  
1920  
Signed *N Lenin*

*Collected Works* Vol 30,  
pp 516-18

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## **“LEFT-WING” COMMUNISM- AN INFANTILE DISORDER**

### **I**

#### **IN WHAT SENSE WE CAN SPEAK OF THE INTERNATIONAL SIGNIFICANCE OF THE RUSSIAN REVOLUTION**

In the first months after the proletariat in Russia had won political power (October 25 [November 7], 1917), it might have seemed that the enormous difference between backward Russia and the advanced countries of Western Europe would lead to the proletarian revolution in the latter countries bearing very little resemblance to ours. We now possess quite considerable international experience, which shows very definitely that certain fundamental features of our revolution have a significance that is not local, or peculiarly national, or Russian alone, but international. I am not speaking here of international significance in the broad sense of the term: not merely several but all the primary features of our revolution, and many of its secondary features, are of international significance in the meaning of its effect on all countries. I am speaking of it in the narrowest sense of the word, taking international significance to mean the international validity or the historical inevitability of a repetition, on an international scale, of what has taken place in our country. It must be admitted that certain fundamental features of our revolution do possess that significance.

It would, of course, be grossly erroneous to exaggerate this truth and to extend it beyond certain fundamental features of our revolution. It would also be erroneous to lose sight of the fact that, soon after the victory of the proletarian revolution in at least one of the advanced countries, a sharp change will probably come about: Russia will cease to be the model and will once again become a backward country (in the “Soviet” and the socialist sense).

At the present moment in history, however, it is the Russian model that reveals to *all* countries something—and something



highly significant—of their near and inevitable future. Advanced workers in all lands have long realised this; more often than not, they have grasped it with their revolutionary class instinct rather than realised it. Herein lies the international “significance” (in the narrow sense of the word) of Soviet power, and of the fundamentals of Bolshevik theory and tactics. The “revolutionary” leaders of the Second International, such as Kautsky in Germany and Otto Bauer and Friedrich Adler in Austria, have failed to understand this, which is why they have proved to be reactionaries and advocates, of the worst kind of opportunism and social treachery. Incidentally, the anonymous pamphlet entitled *The World Revolution (Weltrevolution)*,<sup>117</sup> which appeared in Vienna in 1919 (*Sozialistische Bücherei*, Heft 11; Ignaz Brand), very clearly reveals their entire thinking and their entire range of ideas, or, rather, the full extent of their stupidity, pedantry, baseness and betrayal of working-class interests—and that, moreover, under the guise of “defending” the idea of “world revolution”.

We shall, however, deal with this pamphlet in greater detail some other time. We shall here note only one more point: in bygone days, when he was still a Marxist and not a renegade, Kautsky, dealing with the question as an historian, foresaw the possibility of a situation arising in which the revolutionary spirit of the Russian proletariat would provide a model to Western Europe. This was in 1902, when Kautsky wrote an article for the revolutionary *Iskra*,<sup>118</sup> entitled “The Slavs and Revolution”. Here is what he wrote in the article:

“At the present time [in contrast with 1848] it would seem that not only have the Slavs entered the ranks of the revolutionary nations, but that the centre of revolutionary thought and revolutionary action is shifting more and more to the Slavs. The revolutionary centre is shifting from the West to the East. In the first half of the nineteenth century it was located in France, at times in England. In 1848 Germany too joined the ranks of the revolutionary nations. . . . The new century has begun with events which suggest the idea that we are approaching a further shift of the revolutionary centre, namely, to Russia. . . . Russia, which has borrowed so much revolutionary initiative from the West, is now perhaps herself ready to serve the West as a source of revolutionary energy. The Russian revolutionary movement that is now flaring up will perhaps prove to be the most potent means of exorcising the spirit of flabby philistinism and coldly calculating politics that is beginning to spread in our midst, and it may cause the fighting spirit and the passionate devotion to our great ideals to flare up again. To Western Europe, Russia has long ceased to be a bulwark of reaction and absolutism. I think the reverse is true today. Western Europe is becoming Russia's bulwark of reaction and absolutism. . . . The Russian revolutionaries might perhaps have coped with the tsar long ago had they not been compelled at the same time to fight his ally—European capital. Let us hope that this time they will succeed in coping with both enemies, and that the new ‘Holy Alliance’ will collapse more rapidly than its predecessors did. However the present struggle in Russia may end, the blood and suffering of the martyrs whom, unfortunately, it will produce in

too great numbers, will not have been in vain. They will nourish the shoots of social revolution throughout the civilised world and make them grow more luxuriantly and rapidly. In 1848 the Slavs were a killing frost which blighted the flowers of the people's spring. Perhaps they are now destined to be the storm that will break the ice of reaction and irresistibly bring with it a new and happy spring for the nations" (Karl Kautsky, "The Slavs and Revolution", *Iskra*, Russian Social-Democratic revolutionary newspaper, No. 18, March 10, 1902).

How well Karl Kautsky wrote eighteen years ago!

## II

### AN ESSENTIAL CONDITION OF THE BOLSHEVIKS' SUCCESS

It is, I think, almost universally realised at present that the Bolsheviks could not have retained power for two and a half months, let alone two and a half years, without the most rigorous and truly iron discipline in our Party, or without the fullest and unreserved support from the entire mass of the working class, that is, from all thinking, honest, devoted and influential elements in it, capable of leading the backward strata or carrying the latter along with them.

The dictatorship of the proletariat means a most determined and most ruthless war waged by the new class against a *more powerful* enemy, the bourgeoisie, whose resistance is increased *tenfold* by their overthrow (even if only in a single country), and whose power lies, not only in the strength of international capital, the strength and durability of their international connections, but also in the *force of habit*, in the strength of *small-scale production*. Unfortunately, small-scale production is still widespread in the world, and small-scale production engenders capitalism and the bourgeoisie continuously, daily, hourly, spontaneously, and on a mass scale. All these reasons make the dictatorship of the proletariat necessary, and victory over the bourgeoisie is impossible without a long, stubborn and desperate life-and-death struggle which calls for tenacity, discipline, and a single and inflexible will.

I repeat: the experience of the victorious dictatorship of the proletariat in Russia has clearly shown even to those who are incapable of thinking or have had no occasion to give thought to the matter that absolute centralisation and rigorous discipline in the proletariat are an essential condition of victory over the bourgeoisie.

This is often dwelt on. However, not nearly enough thought is given to what it means, and under what conditions it is pos-

sible. Would it not be better if the salutations addressed to the Soviets and the Bolsheviks were *more frequently* accompanied by a *profound analysis* of the reasons *why* the Bolsheviks have been able to build up the discipline needed by the revolutionary proletariat?

As a current of political thought and as a political party, Bolshevism has existed since 1903. Only the history of Bolshevism during the *entire* period of its existence can satisfactorily explain why it has been able to build up and maintain, under most difficult conditions, the iron discipline needed for the victory of the proletariat.

The first questions to arise are: how is the discipline of the proletariat's revolutionary party maintained? How is it tested? How is it reinforced? First, by the class-consciousness of the proletarian vanguard and by its devotion to the revolution, by its tenacity, self-sacrifice and heroism. Second, by its ability to link up, maintain the closest contact, and—if you wish—merge, in certain measure, with the broadest masses of the working people—primarily with the proletariat, *but also with the non-proletarian* masses of working people. Third, by the correctness of the political leadership exercised by this vanguard, by the correctness of its political strategy and tactics, provided the broad masses have seen, *from their own experience*, that they are correct. Without these conditions, discipline in a revolutionary party really capable of being the party of the advanced class, whose mission it is to overthrow the bourgeoisie and transform the whole of society, cannot be achieved. Without these conditions, all attempts to establish discipline inevitably fall flat and end up in phrase-mongering and clowning. On the other hand, these conditions cannot emerge at once. They are created only by prolonged effort and hard-won experience. Their creation is facilitated by a correct revolutionary theory, which, in its turn, is not a dogma, but assumes final shape only in close connection with the practical activity of a truly mass and truly revolutionary movement.

The fact that, in 1917-20, Bolshevism was able, under unprecedentedly difficult conditions, to build up and successfully maintain the strictest centralisation and iron discipline was due simply to a number of historical peculiarities of Russia.

On the one hand, Bolshevism arose in 1903 on a very firm foundation of Marxist theory. The correctness of this revolutionary theory, and of it alone, has been proved, not only by world experience throughout the nineteenth century, but especially by the experience of the seekings and vacillations, the errors and disappointments of revolutionary thought in Russia. For about half a century—approximately from the forties to the

nineties of the last century—progressive thought in Russia, oppressed by a most brutal and reactionary tsarism, sought eagerly for a correct revolutionary theory, and followed with the utmost diligence and thoroughness each and every "last word" in this sphere in Europe and America. Russia achieved Marxism—the only correct revolutionary theory—through the *agony* she experienced in the course of half a century of unparalleled torment and sacrifice, of unparalleled revolutionary heroism, incredible energy, devoted searching, study, practical trial, disappointment, verification, and comparison with European experience. Thanks to the political emigration caused by tsarism, revolutionary Russia, in the second half of the nineteenth century, acquired a wealth of international links and excellent information on the forms and theories of the world revolutionary movement, such as no other country possessed.

On the other hand, Bolshevism, which had arisen on this granite foundation of theory, went through fifteen years of practical history (1903-17) unequalled anywhere in the world in its wealth of experience. During those fifteen years, no other country knew anything even approximating to that revolutionary experience, that rapid and varied succession of different forms of the movement—legal and illegal, peaceful and stormy, underground and open, local circles and mass movements, and parliamentary and terrorist forms. In no other country has there been concentrated, in so brief a period, such a wealth of forms, shades, and methods of struggle of *all* classes of modern society, a struggle which, owing to the backwardness of the country and the severity of the tsarist yoke, matured with exceptional rapidity, and assimilated most eagerly and successfully the appropriate "last word" of American and European political experience.

### III

#### THE PRINCIPAL STAGES IN THE HISTORY OF BOLSHEVISM

The years of preparation for revolution (1903-05). The approach of a great storm was sensed everywhere. All classes were in a state of ferment and preparation. Abroad, the press of the political exiles discussed the theoretical aspects of *all* the fundamental problems of the revolution. Representatives of the three main classes, of the three principal political trends—the liberal-bourgeois, the petty-bourgeois-democratic (concealed behind "social-democratic" and "social-revolutionary" labels<sup>149</sup>), and

the proletarian-revolutionary—anticipated and prepared the impending open class struggle by waging a most bitter struggle on issues of programme and tactics. *All* the issues on which the masses waged an armed struggle in 1905-07 and 1917-20 can (and should) be studied, in their embryonic form, in the press of the period. Among these three main trends there were, of course, a host of intermediate, transitional or half-hearted forms. It would be more correct to say that those political and ideological trends which were genuinely of a class nature crystallised in the struggle of press organs, parties, factions and groups; the classes were forging the requisite political and ideological weapons for the impending battles.

The years of revolution (1905-07). All classes came out into the open. All programme and tactical views were tested by the action of the masses. In its extent and acuteness, the strike struggle had no parallel anywhere in the world. The economic strike developed into a political strike, and the latter into insurrection. The relations between the proletariat, as the leader, and the vacillating and unstable peasantry, as the led, were tested in practice. The Soviet form of organisation came into being in the spontaneous development of the struggle. The controversies of that period over the significance of the Soviets anticipated the great struggle of 1917-20. The alternation of parliamentary and non-parliamentary forms of struggle, of the tactics of boycotting parliament and that of participating in parliament, of legal and illegal forms of struggle, and likewise their interrelations and connections—all this was marked by an extraordinary wealth of content. As for teaching the fundamentals of political science to masses and leaders, to classes and parties alike, each month of this period was equivalent to an entire year of "peaceful" and "constitutional" development. Without the "dress rehearsal" of 1905, the victory of the October Revolution in 1917 would have been impossible.

The years of reaction (1907-10). Tsarism was victorious. All the revolutionary and opposition parties were smashed. Depression, demoralisation, splits, discord, defection, and pornography took the place of politics. There was an ever greater drift towards philosophical idealism: mysticism became the garb of counter-revolutionary sentiments. At the same time, however, it was this great defeat that taught the revolutionary parties and the revolutionary class a real and very useful lesson, a lesson in historical dialectics, a lesson in an understanding of the political struggle, and in the art and science of waging that struggle. It is at moments of need that one learns who one's friends are. Defeated armies learn their lesson.

Victorious tsarism was compelled to speed up the destruction of the remnants of the pre-bourgeois, patriarchal mode of life in Russia. The country's development along bourgeois lines proceeded apace. Illusions that stood outside and above class distinctions, illusions concerning the possibility of avoiding capitalism, were scattered to the winds. The class struggle manifested itself in a quite new and more distinct way.

The revolutionary parties had to complete their education. They were learning how to attack. Now they had to realise 'hat such knowledge must be supplemented with the knowledge of how to retreat in good order. They had to realise—and it is from bitter experience that the revolutionary class learns to realise this—that victory is impossible unless one has learned how to attack and retreat properly. Of all the defeated opposition and revolutionary parties, the Bolsheviks effected the most orderly retreat, with the least loss to their "army", with its core best preserved, with the least significant splits (in point of depth and incurability), with the least demoralisation, and in the best condition to resume work on the broadest scale and in the most correct and energetic manner. The Bolsheviks achieved this only because they ruthlessly exposed and expelled the revolutionary phrase-mongers, those who did not wish to understand that one had to retreat, that one had to know how to retreat, and that one had absolutely to learn how to work legally in the most reactionary of parliaments, in the most reactionary of trade unions, co-operative and insurance societies and similar organisations.

The years of revival (1910-14). At first progress was incredibly slow, then, following the Lena events of 1912,<sup>120</sup> it became somewhat more rapid. Overcoming unprecedented difficulties, the Bolsheviks thrust back the Mensheviks, whose role as bourgeois agents in the working-class movement was clearly realised by the entire bourgeoisie after 1905, and whom the bourgeoisie therefore supported in a thousand ways against the Bolsheviks. But the Bolsheviks would never have succeeded in doing this had they not followed the correct tactics of combining illegal work with the utilisation of "legal opportunities", which they made a point of doing. In the elections to the arch-reactionary Duma, the Bolsheviks won the full support of the worker curia.

The First Imperialist World War (1914-17). Legal parliamentarianism, with an extremely reactionary "parliament", rendered most useful service to the Bolsheviks, the party of the revolutionary proletariat. The Bolshevik deputies were exiled to Siberia.<sup>121</sup> All shades of social-imperialism, social-chauvinism, social-patriotism, inconsistent and consistent internationalism, pacif-

ism, and the revolutionary repudiation of pacifist illusions found full expression in the Russian émigré press. The learned fools and the old women of the Second International, who had arrogantly and contemptuously turned up their noses at the abundance of "factions" in the Russian socialist movement and at the bitter struggle they were waging among themselves, were unable—when the war deprived them of their vaunted "legality" in *all* the advanced countries—to organise anything even approximating such a free (illegal) interchange of views and such a free (illegal) evolution of correct views as the Russian revolutionaries did in Switzerland and in a number of other countries. That was why both the avowed social-patriots and the "Kautskyites" of all countries proved to be the worst traitors to the proletariat. One of the principal reasons why Bolshevism was able to achieve victory in 1917-20 was that, since the end of 1914, it has been ruthlessly exposing the baseness and vileness of social-chauvinism and "Kautskyism" (to which Longuetism in France, the views of the Fabians<sup>122</sup> and the leaders of the Independent Labour Party<sup>123</sup> in Britain, of Turati in Italy, etc., correspond), the masses later becoming more and more convinced, from their own experience, of the correctness of the Bolshevik views.

The second revolution in Russia (February to October 1917). Tsarism's senility and obsolescence had (with the aid of the blows and hardships of a most agonising war) created an incredibly destructive force directed against it. Within a few days Russia was transformed into a democratic bourgeois republic, freer—in war conditions—than any other country in the world. The leaders of the opposition and revolutionary parties began to set up a government, just as is done in the most "strictly parliamentary" republics; the fact that a man had been a leader of an opposition party in parliament—even in a most reactionary parliament—*facilitated* his subsequent role in the revolution.

In a few weeks the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries thoroughly assimilated all the methods and manners, the arguments and sophistries of the European heroes of the Second International, of the ministerialists<sup>124</sup> and other opportunist riff-raff. Everything we now read about the Scheidemanns and Noskes, about Kautsky and Hilferding, Renner and Austerlitz, Otto Bauer and Fritz Adler, Turati and Longuet, about the Fabians and the leaders of the Independent Labour Party of Britain—all this seems to us (and indeed is) a dreary repetition, a reiteration, of an old and familiar refrain. We have already witnessed all this in the instance of the Mensheviks. As history would have it, the opportunists of a backward country became

the forerunners of the opportunists in a number of advanced countries.

If the heroes of the Second International have all gone bankrupt and have disgraced themselves over the question of the significance and role of the Soviets and Soviet rule; if the leaders of the three very important parties which have now left the Second International (namely, the German Independent Social-Democratic Party,<sup>125</sup> the French Longuetists and the British Independent Labour Party) have disgraced themselves and become entangled in this question in a most "telling" fashion; if they have all shown themselves slaves to the prejudices of petty-bourgeois democracy (fully in the spirit of the petty-bourgeois of 1848 who called themselves "Social-Democrats")—then we can only say that we have *already* witnessed *all* this in the instance of the Mensheviks. As history would have it, the Soviets came into being in Russia in 1905; from February to October 1917 they were turned to a false use by the Mensheviks, who went bankrupt because of their inability to understand the role and significance of the Soviets; today the idea of Soviet power has emerged *throughout the world* and is spreading among the proletariat of all countries with extraordinary speed. Like our Mensheviks, the old heroes of the Second International are *everywhere* going bankrupt, because they are incapable of understanding the role and significance of the Soviets. Experience has proved that, on certain very important questions of the proletarian revolution, *all* countries will inevitably have to do what Russia has done.

Despite views that are today often to be met with in Europe and America, the Bolsheviks began their victorious struggle against the parliamentary and (in fact) bourgeois republic and against the Mensheviks in a very cautious manner, and the preparations they made for it were by no means simple. At the beginning of the period mentioned, we did *not* call for the overthrow of the government but explained that it was impossible to overthrow it *without* first changing the composition and the temper of the Soviets. We did not proclaim a boycott of the bourgeois parliament, the Constituent Assembly, but said—and following the April (1917) Conference of our Party began to state officially in the name of the Party—that a bourgeois republic with a Constituent Assembly would be better than a bourgeois republic without a Constituent Assembly, but that a "workers' and peasants'" republic, a Soviet republic, would be better than any bourgeois-democratic, parliamentary republic. Without such thorough, circumspect and long preparations, we could not have achieved victory in October 1917, or have consolidated that victory.



## IV

**THE STRUGGLE AGAINST WHICH ENEMIES  
WITHIN THE WORKING-CLASS MOVEMENT  
HELPED BOLSHEVISM DEVELOP,  
GAIN STRENGTH,  
AND BECOME STEELED**

First and foremost, the struggle against opportunism, which in 1914 definitely developed into social-chauvinism and definitely sided with the bourgeoisie, against the proletariat. Naturally, this was Bolshevism's principal enemy within the working-class movement. It still remains the principal enemy on an international scale. The Bolsheviks have been devoting the greatest attention to this enemy. This aspect of Bolshevik activities is now fairly well known abroad too.

It was, however, different with Bolshevism's other enemy within the working-class movement. Little is known in other countries of the fact that Bolshevism took shape, developed and became steeled in the long years of struggle against *petty-bourgeois revolutionism*, which smacks of anarchism, or borrows something from the latter and, in all essential matters, does not measure up to the conditions and requirements of a consistently proletarian class struggle. Marxist theory has established—and the experience of all European revolutions and revolutionary movements has fully confirmed—that the petty proprietor, the small master (a social type existing on a very extensive and even mass scale in many European countries), who, under capitalism, always suffers oppression and very frequently a most acute and rapid deterioration in his conditions of life, and even ruin, easily goes to revolutionary extremes, but is incapable of perseverance, organisation, discipline and steadfastness. A petty bourgeois driven to frenzy by the horrors of capitalism is a social phenomenon which, like anarchism, is characteristic of all capitalist countries. The instability of such revolutionism, its barrenness, and its tendency to turn rapidly into submission, apathy, phantasms, and even a frenzied infatuation with one bourgeois fad or another—all this is common knowledge. However, a theoretical or abstract recognition of these truths does not at all rid revolutionary parties of old errors, which always crop up at unexpected occasions, in somewhat new forms, in a hitherto unfamiliar garb or surroundings, in an unusual—a more or less unusual—situation.

Anarchism was not infrequently a kind of penalty for the opportunist sins of the working-class movement. The two mon-

strosities complemented each other. And if in Russia—despite the more petty-bourgeois composition of her population as compared with the other European countries—anarchism's influence was negligible during the two revolutions (of 1905 and 1917) and the preparations for them, this should no doubt stand partly to the credit of Bolshevism, which has always waged a most ruthless and uncompromising struggle against opportunism. I say "partly", since of still greater importance in weakening anarchism's influence in Russia was the circumstance that in the past (the seventies of the nineteenth century) it was able to develop inordinately and to reveal its absolute erroneousness, its unfitness to serve the revolutionary class as a guiding theory.

When it came into being in 1903, Bolshevism took over the tradition of a ruthless struggle against petty-bourgeois, semi-anarchist (or dilettante-anarchist) revolutionism, a tradition which had always existed in revolutionary Social-Democracy and had become particularly strong in our country during the years 1900-03, when the foundations for a mass party of the revolutionary proletariat were being laid in Russia. Bolshevism took over and carried on the struggle against a party which, more than any other, expressed the tendencies of petty-bourgeois revolutionism, namely, the "Socialist-Revolutionary" Party, and waged that struggle on three main issues. First, that party, which rejected Marxism, stubbornly refused (or, it might be more correct to say: was unable) to understand the need for a strictly objective appraisal of the class forces and their alignment, before taking any political action. Second, this party considered itself particularly "revolutionary", or "Left", because of its recognition of individual terrorism, assassination—something that we Marxists emphatically rejected. It was, of course, only on grounds of expediency that we rejected individual terrorism, whereas people who were capable of condemning "on principle" the terror of the Great French Revolution, or, in general, the terror employed by a victorious revolutionary party which is besieged by the bourgeoisie of the whole world, were ridiculed and laughed to scorn by Plekhanov in 1900-03, when he was a Marxist and a revolutionary. Third, the "Socialist-Revolutionaries" thought it very "Left" to sneer at the comparatively insignificant opportunist sins of the German Social-Democratic Party while they themselves imitated the extreme opportunists of that party, for example, on the agrarian question, or on the question of the dictatorship of the proletariat.

History, incidentally, has now confirmed on a vast and world-wide scale the opinion we have always advocated, namely, that German *revolutionary* Social-Democracy (note that as far back

as 1900-03 Plekhanov demanded Bernstein's expulsion from the Party, and in 1913 the Bolsheviks, always continuing this tradition, exposed Legien's baseness,<sup>126</sup> vileness and treachery) *came closest* to being the party the revolutionary proletariat needs in order to achieve victory. Today, in 1920, after all the ignominious failures and crises of the war period and the early post-war years, it can be plainly seen that, of all the Western parties, the German revolutionary Social-Democrats produced the finest leaders, and recovered and gained new strength more rapidly than the others did. This may be seen in the instances both of the Spartacists and the Left, proletarian wing of the Independent Social-Democratic Party of Germany, which is waging an incessant struggle against the opportunism and spinelessness of the Kautskys, Hilferdings, Ledebours and Crispiens. If we now cast a glance to take in a complete historical period, namely, from the Paris Commune to the first Socialist Soviet Republic, we shall find that Marxism's attitude to anarchism in general stands out most definitely and unmistakably. In the final analysis, Marxism proved to be correct, and although the anarchists rightly pointed to the opportunist views on the state prevalent among most of the socialist parties, it must be said, first, that this opportunism was connected with the distortion, and even deliberate suppression, of Marx's views on the state (in my book, *The State and Revolution*, I pointed out that for thirty-six years, from 1875 to 1911, Bebel withheld a letter by Engels,<sup>127</sup> which very clearly, vividly, bluntly and definitively exposed the opportunism of the current Social-Democratic views on the state"); second, that the rectification of these opportunist views, and the recognition of Soviet power and its superiority to bourgeois parliamentary democracy proceeded most rapidly and extensively among those trends in the socialist parties of Europe and America that were most Marxist.

The struggle that Bolshevism waged against "Left" deviations within its own Party assumed particularly large proportions on two occasions: in 1908, on the question of whether or not to participate in a most reactionary "parliament" and in the legal workers' societies, which were being restricted by most reactionary laws; and again in 1918 (the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk), on the question of whether one "compromise" or another was permissible.

In 1908 the "Left" Bolsheviks were expelled from our Party for stubbornly refusing to understand the necessity of participating in a most reactionary "parliament".<sup>128</sup> The "Lefts"—among whom there were many splendid revolutionaries who

subsequently were (and still are) commendable members of the Communist Party—based themselves particularly on the successful experience of the 1905 boycott. When, in August 1905, the tsar proclaimed the convocation of a consultative "parliament",<sup>129</sup> the Bolsheviks called for its boycott, in the teeth of all the opposition parties and the Mensheviks, and the "parliament" was in fact swept away by the revolution of October 1905.<sup>130</sup> The boycott proved correct at the time, not because non-participation in reactionary parliaments is correct in general, but because we accurately appraised the objective situation, which was leading to the rapid development of the mass strikes first into a political strike, then into a revolutionary strike, and finally into an uprising. Moreover, the struggle centred at that time on the question of whether the convocation of the first representative assembly should be left to the tsar, or an attempt should be made to wrest its convocation from the old regime. When there was not, and could not be, any certainty that the objective situation was of a similar kind, and when there was no certainty of a similar trend and the same rate of development, the boycott was no longer correct.

The Bolsheviks' boycott of "parliament" in 1905 enriched the revolutionary proletariat with highly valuable political experience and showed that, when legal and illegal, parliamentary and non-parliamentary forms of struggle are combined, it is sometimes useful and even essential to reject parliamentary forms. It would, however, be highly erroneous to apply this experience blindly, imitatively and uncritically to *other* conditions and *other* situations. The Bolsheviks' boycott of the Duma in 1906 was a mistake, although a minor and easily remediable one.\* The boycott of the Duma in 1907, 1908 and subsequent years was a most serious error and difficult to remedy, because, on the one hand, a very rapid rise of the revolutionary tide and its conversion into an uprising was not to be expected, and, on the other hand, the entire historical situation attendant upon the renovation of the bourgeois monarchy called for legal and illegal activities being combined. Today, when we look back at this fully completed historical period, whose connection with subsequent periods has now become quite clear, it becomes most obvious that in 1908-14 the Bolsheviks *could not have* preserved (let alone strengthened and developed) the core of the revolutionary party of the proletariat, had they not upheld, in a most strenuous struggle, the viewpoint that it was *obligatory* to combine legal and illegal forms of struggle. and that it was

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What applies to individuals also applies—with necessary modifications—to politics and parties. It is not he who makes no mistakes that is intelligent. There are no such men, nor can there be. It is he whose errors are not very grave and who is able to rectify them easily and quickly that is intelligent.

*obligatory* to participate even in a most reactionary parliament and in a number of other institutions hemmed in by reactionary laws (sick benefit societies, etc.).

In 1918 things did not reach a split. At that time the "Left" Communists formed only a separate group or "faction" within our Party, and that not for long. In the same year, 1918, the most prominent representatives of "Left Communism", for example, Comrades Radek and Bukharin, openly acknowledged their error. It had seemed to them that the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk was a compromise with the imperialists, which was inexcusable on principle and harmful to the party of the revolutionary proletariat. It was indeed a compromise with the imperialists, but it was a compromise which, under the circumstances, *had to be made*.

Today, when I hear our tactics in signing the Brest-Litovsk Treaty being attacked by the Socialist-Revolutionaries, for instance, or when I hear Comrade Lansbury say, in a conversation with me, "Our British trade union leaders say that if it was permissible for the Bolsheviks to compromise, it is permissible for them to compromise too", I usually reply by first of all giving a simple and "popular" example:

Imagine that your car is held up by armed bandits. You hand them over your money, passport, revolver and car. In return you are rid of the pleasant company of the bandits. That is unquestionably a compromise. "*Do ut des*" (I "give" you money, fire-arms and a car "so that you give" me the opportunity to get away from you with a whole skin). It would, however, be difficult to find a sane man who would declare such a compromise to be "inadmissible on principle", or who would call the compromiser an accomplice of the bandits (even though the bandits might use the car and the fire-arms for further robberies). Our compromise with the bandits of German imperialism was just that kind of compromise.

But when, in 1914-18 and then in 1918-20, the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries in Russia, the Scheidemannites (and to a large extent the Kautskyites) in Germany, Otto Bauer and Friedrich Adler (to say nothing of the Renners and Co.) in Austria, the Renaudels and Longuets and Co. in France, the Fabians, the Independents and the Labourites<sup>131</sup> in Britain entered into *compromises* with the bandits of their own bourgeoisie, and sometimes of the "Allied" bourgeoisie, and *against* the revolutionary proletariat of their own countries, all these gentlemen were actually acting as *accomplices in banditry*.

The conclusion is clear: to reject compromises "on principle", to reject the permissibility of compromises in general, no matter of what kind, is childishness, which it is difficult even to consider seriously. A political leader who desires to be useful to

the revolutionary proletariat must be able to distinguish *concrete* cases of compromises that are inexcusable and are an expression of opportunism and *treachery*; he must direct all the force of criticism, the full intensity of merciless exposure and relentless war, against *these concrete* compromises, and not allow the past masters of "practical" socialism and the parliamentary Jesuits to dodge and wriggle out of responsibility by means of disquisitions on "compromises in general". It is in this way that the "leaders" of the British trade unions, as well as of the Fabian society and the "Independent" Labour Party, dodge responsibility *for the treachery they have perpetrated*, for having made a *compromise* that is really tantamount to the worst kind of opportunism, treachery and betrayal.

There are different kinds of compromises. One must be able to analyse the situation and the concrete conditions of each compromise, or of each variety of compromise. One must learn to distinguish between a man who has given up his money and fire-arms to bandits so as to lessen the evil they can do and to facilitate their capture and execution, and a man who gives his money and fire-arms to bandits so as to share in the loot. In politics this is by no means always as elementary as it is in this childish simple example. However, anyone who is out to think up for the workers some kind of recipe that will provide them with cut-and-dried solutions for all contingencies, or promises that the policy of the revolutionary proletariat will never come up against difficult or complex situations, is simply a charlatan.

To leave no room for misinterpretation, I shall attempt to outline, if only very briefly, several fundamental rules for the analysis of concrete compromises.

The party which entered into a compromise with the German imperialists by signing the Treaty of Brest Litovsk had been evolving its internationalism in practice ever since the end of 1914. It was not afraid to call for the defeat of the tsarist monarchy and to condemn "defence of country" in a war between two imperialist robbers. The parliamentary representatives of this party preferred exile in Siberia to taking a road leading to ministerial portfolios in a bourgeois government. The revolution that overthrew tsarism and established a democratic republic put this party to a new and tremendous test—it did not enter into any agreements with its "own" imperialists, but prepared and brought about their overthrow. When it had assumed political power, this party did not leave a vestige of either landed or capitalist ownership. After making public and repudiating the imperialists' secret treaties, this party proposed peace to *all* nations, and yielded to the violence of the Brest-Litovsk robbers only after the Anglo-French imperialists had

torpedoed the conclusion of a peace, and after the Bolsheviks had done everything humanly possible to hasten the revolution in Germany and other countries. The absolute correctness of this compromise, entered into by such a party in such a situation, is becoming ever clearer and more obvious with every day.

The Mensheviks and the Socialist-Revolutionaries in Russia (like all the leaders of the Second International throughout the world, in 1914-20) began with treachery—by directly or indirectly justifying “defence of country”, i.e., the defence of *their own* predatory bourgeoisie. They continued their treachery by entering into a coalition with the bourgeoisie of *their own* country, and fighting, together with *their own* bourgeoisie, against the revolutionary proletariat of their own country. Their bloc, first with Kerensky and the Cadets, and then with Kolchak and Denikin in Russia—like the bloc of their *confrères* abroad with the bourgeoisie of *their* respective countries—was in fact desertion to the side of the bourgeoisie, against the proletariat. From beginning to end, *their* compromise with the bandits of imperialism meant their becoming *accomplices* in imperialist banditry.

## V

### “LEFT-WING” COMMUNISM IN GERMANY. THE LEADERS, THE PARTY, THE CLASS, THE MASSES

The German Communists we must now speak of call themselves, not “Left-wingers” but, if I am not mistaken, an “opposition on principle”.<sup>132</sup> From what follows below it will, however, be seen that they reveal all the symptoms of the “infantile disorder of Leftism”.

Published by the “local group in Frankfurt am Main”, a pamphlet reflecting the point of view of this opposition, and entitled *The Split in the Communist Party of Germany (The Spartacus League)*, sets forth the substance of this opposition’s views most saliently, and with the utmost clarity and concision. A few quotations will suffice to acquaint the reader with that substance:

“The Communist Party is the party of the most determined class struggle....”

“... Politically, the transitional period [between capitalism and socialism] is one of the proletarian dictatorship....”

“... The question arises: who is to exercise this dictatorship: *the Communist Party or the proletarian class?*... *Fundamentally*, should we strive for a dictatorship of the Communist Party, or for a dictatorship of the proletarian class?...”

(All italics as in the original.)

The author of the pamphlet goes on to accuse the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Germany of seeking ways of achieving a *coalition with the Independent Social-Democratic Party of Germany*, and of raising "*the question of recognising, in principle, all political means*" of struggle, including parliamentarianism, with the sole purpose of concealing its actual and main efforts to form a coalition with the Independents. The pamphlet goes on to say:

"The opposition have chosen another road. They are of the opinion that the question of the rule of the Communist Party and of the dictatorship of the Party is merely one of tactics. In any case, rule by the Communist Party is the ultimate form of any party rule. *Fundamentally*, we must work for the dictatorship of the proletarian class. And all the measures of the Party, its organisations, methods of struggle, strategy and tactics should be directed to that end. Accordingly, all compromise with other parties, all reversion to parliamentary forms of struggle, which have become historically and politically obsolete, and any policy of manoeuvring and compromise must be emphatically rejected." "Specifically proletarian methods of revolutionary struggle must be strongly emphasised. New forms of organisation must be created on the widest basis and with the widest scope in order to enlist the most extensive proletarian circles and strata to take part in the revolutionary struggle under the leadership of the Communist Party. A *Workers' Union*, based on factory organisations, should be the rallying point for all revolutionary elements. This should unite all workers who follow the slogan: 'Get out of the trade unions!' It is here that the militant proletariat musters its ranks for battle. Recognition of the class struggle, of the Soviet system and of the dictatorship should be sufficient for enrolment. All subsequent political education of the fighting masses and their political orientation in the struggle are the task of the Communist Party, which stands outside the Workers' Union....

"... Consequently, two Communist parties are now arrayed against each other:

"*One is a party of leaders*, which is out to organise the revolutionary struggle and to direct it from *above*, accepting compromises and parliamentarianism so as to create a situation enabling it to join a coalition government exercising a dictatorship.

"*The other is a mass party*, which expects an upsurge of the revolutionary struggle from *below*, which knows and applies a single method in this struggle—a method which clearly leads to the goal—and rejects all parliamentary and opportunist methods. That single method is the unconditional *overthrow of the bourgeoisie*, so as then to set up the proletarian class dictatorship for the accomplishment of socialism....

"... There—the dictatorship of leaders; here—the dictatorship of the masses! That is our slogan."

Such are the main features characterising the views of the opposition in the German Communist Party.

Any Bolshevik who has consciously participated in the development of Bolshevism since 1903 or has closely observed that development will at once say, after reading these arguments, "What old and familiar rubbish! What 'Left-wing' childishness!"



But let us examine these arguments a little more closely.

The mere presentation of the question—"dictatorship of the party or dictatorship of the class; dictatorship (party) of the leaders, or dictatorship (party) of the masses?"—testifies to most incredibly and hopelessly muddled thinking. These people want to *invent* something quite out of the ordinary, and, in their effort to be clever, make themselves ridiculous. It is common knowledge that the masses are divided into classes; that the masses can be contrasted with classes only by contrasting the vast majority in general, regardless of division according to status in the social system of production, with categories holding a definite status in the social system of production; that as a rule and in most cases—at least in present-day civilised countries—classes are led by political parties; that political parties, as a general rule, are run by more or less stable groups composed of the most authoritative, influential and experienced members, who are elected to the most responsible positions, and are called leaders. All this is elementary. All this is clear and simple. Why replace this with some kind of rigmorole, some new Volapük? On the one hand, these people seem to have got muddled when they found themselves in a predicament, when the party's abrupt transition from legality to illegality upset the customary, normal and simple relations between leaders, parties and classes. In Germany, as in other European countries, people had become too accustomed to legality, to the free and proper election of "leaders" at regular party congresses, to the convenient method of testing the class composition of parties through parliamentary elections, mass meetings, the press, the sentiments of the trade unions and other associations, etc. When, instead of this customary procedure, it became necessary, because of the stormy development of the revolution and the development of the civil war, to go over rapidly from legality to illegality, to combine the two, and to adopt the "inconvenient" and "undemocratic" methods of selecting, or forming, or preserving "groups of leaders"—people lost their bearings and began to think up some unmitigated nonsense. Certain members of the Communist Party of Holland, who were unlucky enough to be born in a small country with traditions and conditions of highly privileged and highly stable legality, and who had never seen a transition from legality to illegality, probably fell into confusion, lost their heads, and helped create these absurd inventions.

On the other hand, one can see simply a thoughtless and incoherent use of the now "fashionable" terms: "masses" and "leaders". These people have heard and memorised a great many attacks on "leaders", in which the latter have been contrasted with the "masses"; however, they have proved unable to think

matters out and gain a clear understanding of what it was all about.

The divergence between "leaders" and "masses" was brought out with particular clarity and sharpness in all countries at the end of the imperialist war and following it. The principal reason for this was explained many times by Marx and Engels between the years 1852 and 1892, from the example of Britain. That country's exclusive position led to the emergence, from the "masses", of a semi-petty-bourgeois, opportunist "labour aristocracy". The leaders of this labour aristocracy were constantly going over to the bourgeoisie, and were directly or indirectly on its pay roll. Marx earned the honour of incurring the hatred of these disreputable persons by openly branding them as traitors. Present-day (twentieth-century) imperialism has given a few advanced countries an exceptionally privileged position, which, everywhere in the Second International, has produced a certain type of traitor, opportunist, and social-chauvinist leaders, who champion the interests of their own craft, their own section of the labour aristocracy. The opportunist parties have become separated from the "masses", i.e., from the broadest strata of the working people, their majority, the lowest-paid workers. The revolutionary proletariat cannot be victorious unless this evil is combated, unless the opportunist, social-traitor leaders are exposed, discredited and expelled. That is the policy the Third International has embarked on.

To go so far, in this connection, as to contrast, *in general*, the dictatorship of the masses with a dictatorship of the leaders is ridiculously absurd, and stupid. What is particularly amusing is that, in fact, instead of the old leaders, who hold generally accepted views on simple matters, *new leaders* are brought forth (under cover of the slogan "Down with the leaders!"), who talk rank stuff and nonsense. Such are Laufenberg, Wolffheim, Horner, Karl Schröder, Friedrich Wendel and Karl Erler,\* in Germany. Erler's attempts to give the question more "profundity" and to proclaim that in general political parties

\* Karl Erler, "The Dissolution of the Party", *Kommunistische Arbeiterzeitung*,<sup>133</sup> Hamburg, February 7, 1920, No. 32: "The working class cannot destroy the bourgeois state without destroying bourgeois democracy, and it cannot destroy bourgeois democracy without destroying parties."

The more muddle-headed of the syndicalists and anarchists in the Latin countries may derive "satisfaction" from the fact that solid Germans, who evidently consider themselves Marxists (by their articles in the above-mentioned paper K. Erler and K. Horner have shown most plainly that they consider themselves sound Marxists, but talk incredible nonsense in a most ridiculous manner and reveal their failure to understand the ABC of Marxism), go to the length of making utterly inept statements. Mere acceptance of Marxism does not save one from errors. We Russians know this especially well, because Marxism has been very often the "fashion" in our country.

are unnecessary and "bourgeois" are so supremely absurd that one can only shrug one's shoulders. It all goes to drive home the truth that a minor error can always assume monstrous proportions if it is persisted in, if profound justifications are sought for it, and if it is carried to its logical conclusion.

Repudiation of the Party principle and of Party discipline—that is what the opposition has *arrived at*. And this is tantamount to completely disarming the proletariat *in the interests of the bourgeoisie*. It all adds up to that petty-bourgeois diffuseness and instability, that incapacity for sustained effort, unity and organised action, which, if encouraged, must inevitably destroy any proletarian revolutionary movement. From the standpoint of communism, repudiation of the Party principle means attempting to leap from the eve of capitalism's collapse (in Germany), not to the lower or the intermediate phase of communism, but to the higher. We in Russia (in the third year since the overthrow of the bourgeoisie) are making the first steps in the transition from capitalism to socialism or the lower stage of communism. Classes still remain, and will remain everywhere *for years after* the proletariat's conquest of power. Perhaps in Britain, where there is no peasantry (but where petty proprietors exist), this period may be shorter. The abolition of classes means, not merely ousting the landowners and the capitalists—that is something we accomplished with comparative ease; it also means *abolishing the small commodity producers*, and they *cannot be ousted*, or crushed; we *must learn to live* with them. They can (and must) be transformed and re-educated only by means of very prolonged, slow, and cautious organisational work. They surround the proletariat on every side with a petty-bourgeois atmosphere, which permeates and corrupts the proletariat, and constantly causes among the proletariat relapses into petty-bourgeois spinelessness, disunity, individualism, and alternating moods of exaltation and dejection. The strictest centralisation and discipline are required within the political party of the proletariat in order to counteract this, in order that the *organisational* role of the proletariat (and that is its *principal* role) may be exercised correctly, successfully and victoriously. The dictatorship of the proletariat means a persistent struggle—bloody and bloodless, violent and peaceful, military and economic, educational and administrative—against the forces and traditions of the old society. The force of habit in millions and tens of millions is a most formidable force. Without a party of iron that has been tempered in the struggle, a party enjoying the confidence of all honest people in the class in question, a party capable of watching and influencing the mood of the masses, such a struggle cannot be waged successfully. It is a thousand times *easier* to vanquish

the centralised big bourgeoisie than to "vanquish" the millions upon millions of petty proprietors; however, through their ordinary, everyday, imperceptible, elusive and demoralising activities, they produce the *very* results which the bourgeoisie need and which tend to *restore* the bourgeoisie. Whoever brings about even the slightest weakening of the iron discipline of the party of the proletariat (especially during its dictatorship), is actually aiding the bourgeoisie against the proletariat.

Parallel with the question of the leaders—the party—the class—the masses, we must pose the question of the "reactionary" trade unions. But first I shall take the liberty of making a few concluding remarks based on the experience of our Party. There *have always been* attacks on the "dictatorship of leaders" in our Party. The first time I heard such attacks, I recall, was in 1895, when, officially, no party yet existed, but a central group was taking shape in St. Petersburg, which was to assume the leadership of the district groups.<sup>134</sup> At the Ninth Congress of our Party (April 1920) there was a small opposition, which also spoke against the "dictatorship of leaders", against the "oligarchy", and so on.\* There is therefore nothing surprising, new, or terrible in the "infantile disorder" of "Left-wing communism" among the Germans. The ailment involves no danger, and after it the organism even becomes more robust. In our case, on the other hand, the rapid alternation of legal and illegal work, which made it necessary to keep the general staff—the leaders—under cover and cloak them in the greatest secrecy, sometimes gave rise to extremely dangerous consequences. The worst of these was that in 1912 the *agent provocateur* Malinovsky got into the Bolshevik Central Committee. He betrayed scores and scores of the best and most loyal comrades, caused them to be sentenced to penal servitude, and hastened the death of many of them. That he did not cause still greater harm was due to the correct balance between legal and illegal work. As member of the Party's Central Committee and Duma deputy, Malinovsky was forced, in order to gain our confidence, to help us establish legal daily papers, which even under tsarism were able to wage a struggle against the Menshevik opportunism and to spread the fundamentals of Bolshevism in a suitably disguised form. While, with one hand, Malinovsky sent scores and scores of the finest Bolsheviks to penal servitude and death, he was obliged, with the other, to assist in the education of scores and scores of thousands of new Bolsheviks through the medium of the legal press. Those German (and also British, American, French and Italian) comrades who are faced with the task of learning how to conduct

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\* See this volume, pp. 282-87.—Ed.

revolutionary work within the reactionary trade unions would do well to give serious thought to this fact.\*

In many countries, including the most advanced, the bourgeoisie are undoubtedly sending *agents provocateurs* into the Communist parties and will continue to do so. A skilful combining of illegal and legal work is one of the ways to combat this danger.

## VI

### SHOULD REVOLUTIONARIES WORK IN REACTIONARY TRADE UNIONS?

The German "Lefts" consider that, as far as they are concerned, the reply to this question is an unqualified negative. In their opinion, declamations and angry outcries (such as uttered by K. Horner in a particularly "solid" and particularly stupid manner) against "reactionary" and "counter-revolutionary" trade unions are sufficient "proof" that it is unnecessary and even inexcusable for revolutionaries and Communists to work in yellow, social-chauvinist, compromising and counter-revolutionary trade unions of the Legien type.

However firmly the German "Lefts" may be convinced of the revolutionism of such tactics, the latter are in fact fundamentally wrong, and contain nothing but empty phrases.

To make this clear, I shall begin with our own experience, in keeping with the general plan of the present pamphlet, which is aimed at applying to Western Europe whatever is universally practicable, significant and relevant in the history and the present-day tactics of Bolshevism.

In Russia today, the connection between leaders, party, class and masses, as well as the attitude of the dictatorship of the proletariat and its party to the trade unions, are concretely as follows: the dictatorship is exercised by the proletariat organised in the Soviets; the proletariat is guided by the Communist Party of Bolsheviks, which, according to the figures of the latest

\* Malinovsky was a prisoner of war in Germany. On his return to Russia when the Bolsheviks were in power he was instantly put on trial and shot by our workers. The Mensheviks attacked us most bitterly for our mistake—the fact that an *agent provocateur* had become a member of the Central Committee of our Party. But when, under Kerensky, we demanded the arrest and trial of Rodzyanko, the Chairman of the Duma, because he had known, even before the war, that Malinovsky was an *agent provocateur* and had not informed the Trudoviks<sup>135</sup> and the workers in the Duma, neither the Mensheviks nor the Socialist-Revolutionaries in the Kerensky government supported our demand, and Rodzyanko remained at large and made off unhindered to join Denikin.

Party Congress (April 1920), has a membership of 611,000. The membership varied greatly both before and after the October Revolution, and used to be much smaller, even in 1918 and 1919.<sup>136</sup> We are apprehensive of an excessive growth of the Party, because careerists and charlatans, who deserve only to be shot, inevitably do all they can to insinuate themselves into the ranks of the ruling party. The last time we opened wide the doors of the Party—to workers and peasants only—was when (in the winter of 1919) Yudenich was within a few versts of Petrograd, and Denikin was in Orel (about 350 versts from Moscow), i.e., when the Soviet Republic was in mortal danger, and when adventurers, careerists, charlatans and unreliable persons generally could not possibly count on making a profitable career (and had more reason to expect the gallows and torture) by joining the Communists.<sup>137</sup> The Party, which holds annual congresses (the most recent on the basis of one delegate per 1,000 members), is directed by a Central Committee of nineteen elected at the Congress, while the current work in Moscow has to be carried on by still smaller bodies, known as the Organising Bureau and the Political Bureau, which are elected at plenary meetings of the Central Committee, five members of the Central Committee to each bureau. This, it would appear, is a full-fledged "oligarchy". No important political or organisational question is decided by any state institution in our republic without the guidance of the Party's Central Committee.

In its work, the Party relies directly on the *trade unions*, which, according to the data of the last congress (April 1920), now have a membership of over four million and are formally *non-Party*. Actually, all the directing bodies of the vast majority of the unions, and primarily, of course, of the all-Russia general trade union centre or bureau (the All-Russia Central Council of Trade Unions), are made up of Communists and carry out all the directives of the Party. Thus, on the whole, we have a formally non-communist, flexible and relatively wide and very powerful proletarian apparatus, by means of which the Party is closely linked up with the *class* and the *masses*, and by means of which, under the leadership of the Party, the *class dictatorship* is exercised. Without close contacts with the trade unions, and without their energetic support and devoted efforts, not only in economic, *but also in military* affairs, it would of course have been impossible for us to govern the country and to maintain the dictatorship for two and a half months, let alone two and a half years. In practice, these very close contacts naturally call for highly complex and diversified work in the form of propaganda, agitation, timely and frequent conferences, not only with the leading trade union workers, but with influential trade union work-

ers generally; they call for a determined struggle against the Mensheviks, who still have a certain though very small following to whom they teach all kinds of counter-revolutionary machinations, ranging from an ideological defence of (*bourgeois*) democracy and the preaching that the trade unions should be "independent" (independent of proletarian state power!) to sabotage of proletarian discipline, etc., etc.

We consider that contacts with the "masses" through the trade unions are not enough. In the course of our revolution, practical activities have given rise to such institutions as *non-Party workers' and peasants' conferences*, and we strive by every means to support, develop and extend this institution in order to be able to observe the temper of the masses, come closer to them, meet their requirements, promote the best among them to state posts, etc. Under a recent decree on the transformation of the People's Commissariat of State Control into the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection, non-Party conferences of this kind have been empowered to select members of the State Control to carry out various kinds of investigations, etc.

Then, of course, all the work of the Party is carried on through the Soviets, which embrace the working masses, irrespective of occupation. The district congresses of Soviets are *democratic* institutions, the like of which even the best of the democratic republics of the bourgeois world have never known; through these congresses (whose proceedings the Party endeavours to follow with the closest attention), as well as by continually appointing class-conscious workers to various posts in the rural districts, the proletariat exercises its role of leader of the peasantry, gives effect to the dictatorship of the urban proletariat, wages a systematic struggle against the rich, bourgeois, exploiting and profiteering peasantry, etc.

Such is the general mechanism of the proletarian state power viewed "from above", from the standpoint of the practical implementation of the dictatorship. We hope that the reader will understand why the Russian Bolshevik, who has known this mechanism for twenty-five years and has seen it develop out of small, illegal and underground circles, cannot help regarding all this talk about "from above" or "from below", about the dictatorship of leaders or the dictatorship of the masses, etc., as ridiculous and childish nonsense, something like discussing whether a man's left leg or right arm is of greater use to him.

We cannot but regard as equally ridiculous and childish nonsense the pompous, very learned, and frightfully revolutionary disquisitions of the German Lefts to the effect that Communists cannot and should not work in reactionary trade unions, that it is permissible to turn down such work, that it is necessary to

withdraw from the trade unions and create a brand-new and immaculate "Workers' Union" invented by very pleasant (and, probably, for the most part very youthful) Communists, etc., etc.

Capitalism inevitably leaves socialism the legacy, on the one hand, of the old trade and craft distinctions among the workers, distinctions evolved in the course of centuries; on the other hand, trade unions, which only very slowly, in the course of years and years, can and will develop into broader industrial unions with less of the craft union about them (embracing entire industries and not only crafts, trades and occupations), and later proceed, through these industrial unions, to eliminate the division of labour among people, to educate and school people, give them *all-round development and an all-round training*, so that they *are able to do everything*. Communism is advancing and must advance towards that goal, and *will reach* it, but only after very many years. To attempt in practice, today, to anticipate this future result of a fully developed, fully stabilised and constituted, fully comprehensive and mature communism would be like trying to teach higher mathematics to a child of four.

We can (and must) begin to build socialism, not with abstract human material, or with human material specially prepared by us, but with the human material bequeathed to us by capitalism. True, that is no easy matter, but no other approach to this task is serious enough to warrant discussion.

The trade unions were a tremendous step forward for the working class in the early days of capitalist development, inasmuch as they marked a transition from the workers' disunity and helplessness to the rudiments of class organisation. When the *revolutionary party of the proletariat*, the *highest* form of proletarian class organisation, began to take shape (and the Party will not merit the name until it learns to weld the leaders into one indivisible whole with the class and the masses), the trade unions inevitably began to reveal *certain* reactionary features, a certain craft narrow-mindedness, a certain tendency to be non-political, a certain inertness, etc. However, the development of the proletariat did not, and could not, proceed anywhere in the world otherwise than through the trade unions, through reciprocal action between them and the party of the working class. The proletariat's conquest of political power is a gigantic step forward for the proletariat as a class, and the Party must more than ever and in a new way, not only in the old, educate and guide the trade unions, at the same time bearing in mind that they are and will long remain an indispensable "school of communism" and a preparatory school that trains proletarians to exercise their dictatorship, an indispensable organisation of the workers for



the gradual transfer of the management of the whole economic life of the country to the working *class* (and not to the separate trades), and later to all the working people.

In the sense mentioned above, a *certain* "reactionism" in the trade unions is *inevitable* under the dictatorship of the proletariat. Not to understand this means a complete failure to understand the fundamental conditions of the *transition* from capitalism to socialism. It would be egregious folly to fear *this* "reactionism" or to try to *evade* or leap over it, for it would mean fearing that function of the proletarian vanguard which consists in training, educating, enlightening and drawing into the new life the most backward strata and masses of the working class and the peasantry. On the other hand, it would be a still graver error to postpone the achievement of the dictatorship of the proletariat until a time when there will not be a single worker with a narrow-minded craft outlook, or with craft and craft-union prejudices. The art of politics (and the Communist's correct understanding of his tasks) consists in correctly gauging the conditions and the moment when the vanguard of the proletariat can successfully assume power, when it is able—during and after the seizure of power—to win adequate support from sufficiently broad strata of the working class and of the non-proletarian working masses, and when it is able thereafter to maintain, consolidate and extend its rule by educating, training and attracting ever broader masses of the working people.

Further. In countries more advanced than Russia, a certain reactionism in the trade unions has been and was bound to be manifested in a far greater measure than in our country. Our Mensheviks found support in the trade unions (and to some extent still do so in a small number of unions), as a result of the latter's craft narrow-mindedness, craft selfishness and opportunism. The Mensheviks of the West have acquired a much firmer footing in the trade unions; there the *craft-union, narrow-minded, selfish, case-hardened, covetous, and petty-bourgeois "labour aristocracy", imperialist-minded, and imperialist-corrupted*, has developed into a much stronger section than in our country. That is incontestable. The struggle against the Gomperses, and against the Jouhaux, Hendersons, Merrheims, Legiens and Co. in Western Europe is much more difficult than the struggle against our Mensheviks, who are an *absolutely homogeneous* social and political type. This struggle must be waged ruthlessly, and it must unfailingly be brought—as we brought it—to a point when all the incorrigible leaders of opportunism and social-chauvinism are completely discredited and driven out of the trade unions. Political power cannot be captured (and the attempt to capture it should not be made) until the struggle has reached a *certain* stage.

This "certain stage" will be *different* in different countries and in different circumstances; it can be correctly gauged only by thoughtful, experienced and knowledgeable political leaders of the proletariat in each particular country. (In Russia the elections to the Constituent Assembly<sup>138</sup> in November 1917, a few days after the proletarian revolution of October 25, 1917, were one of the criteria of the success of this struggle. In these elections the Mensheviks were utterly defeated; they received 700,000 votes—1,400,000 if the vote in Transcaucasia is added—against 9,000,000 votes polled by the Bolsheviks. See my article, "The Constituent Assembly Elections and the Dictatorship of the Proletariat",\* in the *Communist International*<sup>139</sup> No. 7-8.)

We are waging a struggle against the "labour aristocracy" in the name of the masses of the workers and in order to win them over to our side; we are waging the struggle against the opportunist and social-chauvinist leaders in order to win the working class over to our side. It would be absurd to forget this most elementary and most self-evident truth. Yet it is this very absurdity that the German "Left" Communists perpetrate when, *because* of the reactionary and counter-revolutionary character of the trade union *top leadership*, they jump to the conclusion that... we must withdraw from the trade unions, refuse to work in them, and create new and *artificial* forms of labour organisation! This is so unpardonable a blunder that it is tantamount to the greatest service Communists could render the bourgeoisie. Like all the opportunist, social-chauvinist, and Kautskyite trade union leaders, our Mensheviks are nothing but "agents of the bourgeoisie in the working-class movement" (as we have always said the Mensheviks are), or "labour lieutenants of the capitalist class", to use the splendid and profoundly true expression of the followers of Daniel De Leon in America. To refuse to work in the reactionary trade unions means leaving the insufficiently developed or backward masses of workers under the influence of the reactionary leaders, the agents of the bourgeoisie, the labour aristocrats, or "workers who have become completely bourgeois" (cf. Engels's letter to Marx in 1858 about the British workers<sup>140</sup>).

This ridiculous "theory" that Communists should not work in reactionary trade unions reveals with the utmost clarity the frivolous attitude of the "Left" Communists towards the question of influencing the "masses", and their misuse of clamour about the "masses". If you want to help the "masses" and win the sympathy and support of the "masses", you should not fear difficulties, or pinpricks, chicanery, insults and persecution from the "leaders" (who, being opportunists and social-chauvinists,

\* See V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 30, pp. 252-75.—Ed.

are in most cases directly or indirectly connected with the bourgeoisie and the police), but must absolutely *work wherever the masses are to be found*. You must be capable of any sacrifice, of overcoming the greatest obstacles, in order to carry on agitation and propaganda systematically, perseveringly, persistently and patiently in those institutions, societies and associations—even the most reactionary—in which proletarian or semi-proletarian masses are to be found. The trade unions and the workers' co-operatives (the latter sometimes, at least) are the very organisations in which the masses are to be found. According to figures quoted in the Swedish paper *Folkets Dagblad Politiken*<sup>141</sup> of March 10, 1920, the trade union membership in Great Britain increased from 5,500,000 at the end of 1917 to 6,600,000 at the end of 1918, an increase of 19 per cent. Towards the close of 1919, the membership was estimated at 7,500,000. I have not got the corresponding figures for France and Germany at hand, but absolutely incontestable and generally known facts testify to a rapid rise in the trade union membership in these countries too.

These facts make crystal clear something that is confirmed by thousands of other symptoms, namely, that class-consciousness and the desire for organisation are growing among the proletarian masses, among the rank and file, among the backward elements. Millions of workers in Great Britain, France and Germany are *for the first time* passing from a complete lack of organisation to the elementary, lowest, simplest, and (to those still thoroughly imbued with bourgeois-democratic prejudices) most easily comprehensible form of organisation, namely, the trade unions; yet the revolutionary but imprudent Left Communists stand by, crying out "the masses", "the masses!" but *refusing to work within the trade unions*, on the pretext that they are "reactionary", and invent a brand-new, immaculate little "Workers' Union", which is guiltless of bourgeois-democratic prejudices and innocent of craft or narrow-minded craft-union sins, a union which, they claim, will be (!) a broad organisation. "Recognition of the Soviet system and the dictatorship" will be the *only* (!) condition of membership. (See the passage quoted above.)

It would be hard to imagine any greater ineptitude or greater harm to the revolution than that caused by the "Left" revolutionaries! Why, if we in Russia today, after two and a half years of unprecedented victories over the bourgeoisie of Russia and the Entente, were to make "recognition of the dictatorship" a condition of trade union membership, we would be doing a very foolish thing, damaging our influence among the masses, and helping the Mensheviks. The task devolving on Communists is to *convince* the backward elements, to work *among* them, and not to *fence*

*themselves off* from them with artificial and childish "Left" slogans.

There can be no doubt that the Gomperses, the Hendersons, the Jouhaux and the Legiens are very grateful to those "Left" revolutionaries who, like the German opposition "on principle" (heaven preserve us from such "principles"!), or like some of the revolutionaries in the American Industrial Workers of the World<sup>142</sup> advocate quitting the reactionary trade unions and refusing to work in them. These men, the "leaders" of opportunism, will no doubt resort to every device of bourgeois diplomacy and to the aid of bourgeois governments, the clergy, the police and the courts, to keep Communists out of the trade unions, oust them by every means, make their work in the trade unions as unpleasant as possible, and insult, bait and persecute them. We must be able to stand up to all this, agree to make any sacrifice, and even—if need be—to resort to various stratagems, artifices and illegal methods, to evasions and subterfuges, as long as we get into the trade unions, remain in them, and carry on communist work within them at all costs. Under tsarism we had no "legal opportunities" whatsoever until 1905. However, when Zubatov, agent of the secret police, organised Black-Hundred workers' assemblies and workingmen's societies for the purpose of trapping revolutionaries and combating them, we sent members of our Party to these assemblies and into these societies (I personally remember one of them, Comrade Babushkin, a leading St. Petersburg factory worker, shot by order of the tsar's generals in 1906). They established contacts with the masses, were able to carry on their agitation, and succeeded in wresting workers from the influence of Zubatov's agents.\* Of course, in Western Europe, which is imbued with most deep-rooted legalistic, constitutionalist and bourgeois-democratic prejudices, this is more difficult of achievement. However, it can and must be carried out, and systematically at that.

The Executive Committee of the Third International must, in my opinion, positively condemn, and call upon the next congress of the Communist International to condemn both the policy of refusing to work in reactionary trade unions in general (explaining in detail why such refusal is unwise, and what extreme harm it does to the cause of the proletarian revolution) and, in particular, the line of conduct of some members of the Communist Party of Holland, who—whether directly or indirectly, overtly or covertly, wholly or partly, it does not matter—have supported this

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\* The Gomperses, Hendersons, Jouhaux and Legiens are nothing but Zubatovs, differing from our Zubatov only in their European garb and polish, and the civilised, refined and democratically suave manner of conducting their despicable policy.

*erroneous policy. The Third International must break with the tactics of the Second International; it must not evade or play down points at issue, but must pose them in a straightforward fashion. The whole truth has been put squarely to the "Independents" (the Independent Social-Democratic Party of Germany)\*; the whole truth must likewise be put squarely to the "Left" Communists.*

## VII

### SHOULD WE PARTICIPATE IN BOURGEOIS PARLIAMENTS?

It is with the utmost contempt—and the utmost levity—that the German "Left" Communists reply to this question in the negative. Their arguments? In the passage quoted above we read:

"... All reversion to parliamentary forms of struggle, which have become historically and politically obsolete, must be emphatically rejected...."

This is said with ridiculous pretentiousness, and is patently wrong. "Reversion" to parliamentarianism, forsooth! Perhaps there is already a Soviet republic in Germany? It does not look like it! How, then, can one speak of "reversion"? Is this not an empty phrase?

Parliamentarianism has become "historically obsolete". That is true in the propaganda sense. However, everybody knows that this is still a far cry from overcoming it in *practice*. Capitalism could have been declared—and with full justice—to be "historically obsolete" many decades ago, but that does not at all remove the need for a very long and very persistent struggle *on the basis* of capitalism. Parliamentarianism is "historically obsolete" from the standpoint of *world history*, i.e., the *era* of bourgeois parliamentarianism is over, and the *era* of the proletarian dictatorship has *begun*. That is incontestable. But world history is counted in decades. Ten or twenty years earlier or later makes no difference when measured with the yardstick of world history; from the standpoint of world history it is a trifle that cannot be considered even approximately. But for that very reason, it is a glaring theoretical error to apply the yardstick of world history to practical politics.

Is parliamentarianism "politically obsolete"? That is quite a different matter. If that were true, the position of the "Lefts" would be a strong one. But it has to be proved by a most searching

analysis, and the "Lefts" do not even know how to approach the matter. In the "Theses on Parliamentaryism", published in the *Bulletin of the Provisional Bureau in Amsterdam of the Communist International* No. 1, February 1920, and obviously expressing the Dutch-Left or Left-Dutch strivings, the analysis, as we shall see, is also hopelessly poor.

In the first place, contrary to the opinion of such outstanding political leaders as Rosa Luxemburg and Karl Liebknecht,<sup>143</sup> the German "Lefts", as we know, considered parliamentaryism "politically obsolete" even in January 1919. We know that the "Lefts" were mistaken. This fact alone utterly destroys, at a single stroke, the proposition that parliamentaryism is "politically obsolete". It is for the "Lefts" to prove why their error, indisputable at that time, is no longer an error. They do not and cannot produce even a shred of proof. A political party's attitude towards its own mistakes is one of the most important and surest ways of judging how earnest the party is and how it fulfils in practice its obligations towards its *class* and the *working people*. Frankly acknowledging a mistake, ascertaining the reasons for it, analysing the conditions that have led up to it, and thrashing out the means of its rectification—that is the hallmark of a serious party; that is how it should perform its duties, and how it should educate and train its *class*, and then the *masses*. By failing to fulfil this duty and give the utmost attention and consideration to the study of their patent error, the "Lefts" in Germany (and in Holland) have proved that they are not a *party of a class*, but a circle, not a *party of the masses*, but a group of intellectualists and of a few workers who ape the worst features of intellectualism.

Second, in the same pamphlet of the Frankfurt group of "Lefts", which we have already cited in detail, we read:

"...The millions of workers who still follow the policy of the Centre [the Catholic 'Centre' Party] are counter-revolutionary. The rural proletarians provide the legions of counter-revolutionary troops." (Page 3 of the pamphlet.)

Everything goes to show that this statement is far too sweeping and exaggerated. But the basic fact set forth here is incontrovertible, and its acknowledgement by the "Lefts" is particularly clear evidence of their mistake. How can one say that "parliamentaryism is politically obsolete", when "millions" and "legions" of *proletarians* are not only still in favour of parliamentaryism in general, but are downright "counter-revolutionary"? It is obvious that parliamentaryism in Germany is *not yet* politically obsolete. It is obvious that the "Lefts" in Germany have mistaken *their desire*, their politico-ideological attitude, for objective reality. That is a most dangerous mistake for revo-

lutionaries to make. In Russia—where, over a particularly long period and in particularly varied forms, the most brutal and savage yoke of tsarism produced revolutionaries of diverse shades, revolutionaries who displayed amazing devotion, enthusiasm, heroism and will power—in Russia we have observed this mistake of the revolutionaries at very close quarters; we have studied it very attentively and have a first-hand knowledge of it; that is why we can also see it especially clearly in others. Parliamentaryism is of course “politically obsolete” to the Communists in Germany; but—and that is the whole point—we must *not* regard what is obsolete *to us* as something obsolete *to a class, to the masses*. Here again we find that the “Lefts” do not know how to reason, do not know how to act as the party of a *class*, as the party of the *masses*. You must not sink to the level of the masses, to the level of the backward strata of the class. That is incontestable. You must tell them the bitter truth. You are in duty bound to call their bourgeois-democratic and parliamentary prejudices what they are—prejudices. But at the same time you must *soberly* follow the *actual* state of the class-consciousness and preparedness of the entire class (not only of its communist vanguard), and of all the *working people* (not only of their advanced elements).

Even if only a fairly large *minority* of the industrial workers, and not “millions” and “legions”, follow the lead of the Catholic clergy—and a similar minority of rural workers follow the landowners and kulaks (Grossbauern)—it *undoubtedly* signifies that parliamentaryism in Germany has *not yet* politically outlived itself, that participation in parliamentary elections and in the struggle on the parliamentary rostrum is *obligatory* on the party of the revolutionary proletariat *specifically* for the purpose of educating the backward strata of *its own class*, and for the purpose of awakening and enlightening the undeveloped, downtrodden and ignorant rural *masses*. Whilst you lack the strength to do away with bourgeois parliaments and every other type of reactionary institution, you *must* work within them because *it is there* that you will still find workers who are duped by the priests and stultified by the conditions of rural life; otherwise you risk turning into nothing but windbags.

Third, the “Left” Communists have a great deal to say in praise of us Bolsheviks. One sometimes feels like telling them to praise us less and to try to get a better knowledge of the Bolsheviks’ tactics. We took part in the elections to the Constituent Assembly, the Russian bourgeois parliament, in September-November 1917. Were our tactics correct or not? If not, then this should be clearly stated and proved, for it is necessary in evolving the correct tactics for international communism. If they were

correct, then certain conclusions must be drawn. Of course, there can be no question of placing conditions in Russia on a par with conditions in Western Europe. But as regards the particular question of the meaning of the concept that "parliamentarianism has become politically obsolete", due account should be taken of our experience, for unless concrete experience is taken into account such concepts very easily turn into empty phrases. In September-November 1917, did we, the Russian Bolsheviks, not have *more* right than any Western Communists to consider that parliamentarianism was politically obsolete in Russia? Of course we did, for the point is not whether bourgeois parliaments have existed for a long time or a short time, but how far the masses of the working people are *prepared* (ideologically, politically and practically) to accept the Soviet system and to dissolve the bourgeois-democratic parliament (or allow it to be dissolved). It is an absolutely incontestable and fully established historical fact that, in September-November 1917, the urban working class and the soldiers and peasants of Russia were, because of a number of special conditions, exceptionally well prepared to accept the Soviet system and to disband the most democratic of bourgeois parliaments. Nevertheless, the Bolsheviks did *not* boycott the Constituent Assembly, but took part in the elections both before *and after* the proletariat conquered political power. That these elections yielded exceedingly valuable (and to the proletariat, highly useful) political results has, I make bold to hope, been proved by me in the above-mentioned article, which analyses in detail the returns of the elections to the Constituent Assembly in Russia.\*

The conclusion which follows from this is absolutely incontrovertible: it has been proved that, far from causing harm to the revolutionary proletariat, participation in a bourgeois-democratic parliament, even a few weeks before the victory of a Soviet republic and even *after* such a victory, actually helps that proletariat to *prove* to the backward masses why such parliaments deserve to be done away with; it *facilitates* their successful dissolution, and *helps* to make bourgeois parliamentarianism "politically obsolete". To ignore this experience, while at the same time claiming affiliation to the Communist *International*, which must work out its tactics internationally (not as narrow or exclusively national tactics, but as international tactics), means committing a gross error and actually abandoning internationalism in deed, while recognising it in word.

Now let us examine the "Dutch-Left" arguments in favour of non-participation in parliaments. The following is the text of



Thesis No. 4, the most important of the above-mentioned "Dutch" theses:

"When the capitalist system of production has broken down and society is in a state of revolution, parliamentary action gradually loses importance as compared with the action of the masses themselves. When, in these conditions, parliament becomes the centre and organ of the counter-revolution, whilst, on the other hand, the labouring class builds up the instruments of its power in the Soviets, it may even prove necessary to abstain from all and any participation in parliamentary action."

The first sentence is obviously wrong, since action by the masses, a big strike, for instance, is more important than parliamentary activity at *all* times, and not only during a revolution or in a revolutionary situation. This obviously untenable and historically and politically incorrect argument merely shows very clearly that the authors completely ignore both the general European experience (the French experience before the revolutions of 1848 and 1870; the German experience of 1878-90, etc.) and the Russian experience (see above) of the importance of *combining* legal and illegal struggle. This question is of immense importance both in general and in particular, because in *all* civilised and advanced countries the time is rapidly approaching when such a combination will more and more become—and has already partly become—mandatory on the party of the revolutionary proletariat, inasmuch as civil war between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie is maturing and is imminent, and because of savage persecution of the Communists by republican governments and bourgeois governments generally, which resort to any violation of legality (the example of America is edifying enough), etc. The Dutch, and the Lefts in general, have utterly failed to understand this highly important question.

The second sentence is, in the first place, historically wrong. We Bolsheviks participated in the most counter-revolutionary parliaments, and experience has shown that this participation was not only useful but indispensable to the party of the revolutionary proletariat, after the first bourgeois revolution in Russia (1905), so as to pave the way for the second bourgeois revolution (February 1917), and then for the socialist revolution (October 1917). In the second place, this sentence is amazingly illogical. If a parliament becomes an organ and a "centre" (in reality it never has been and never can be a "centre", but that is by the way) of counter-revolution, while the workers are building up the instruments of their power in the form of the Soviets, then it follows that the workers must prepare—ideologically, politically and technically—for the struggle of the Soviets against parliament, for the dispersal of parliament by the Soviets. But it does not at all follow that this dispersal is hindered, or is not facili-

tated, by the presence of a Soviet opposition *within* the counter-revolutionary parliament. In the course of our victorious struggle against Denikin and Kolchak, we never found that the existence of a Soviet and proletarian opposition in their camp was immaterial to our victories. We know perfectly well that the dispersal of the Constituent Assembly on January 5, 1918 was not hampered but was actually facilitated by the fact that, within the counter-revolutionary Constituent Assembly which was about to be dispersed, there was a consistent Bolshevik, as well as an inconsistent, Left Socialist-Revolutionary Soviet opposition. The authors of the theses are engaged in muddled thinking; they have forgotten the experience of many, if not all, revolutions, which shows the great usefulness, during a revolution, of a *combination* of mass action outside a reactionary parliament with an opposition sympathetic to (or, better still, directly supporting) the revolution within it. The Dutch, and the "Lefts" in general, argue in this respect like doctrinaires of the revolution, who have never taken part in a real revolution, have never given thought to the history of revolutions, or have naïvely mistaken subjective "rejection" of a reactionary institution for its actual destruction by the combined operation of a number of objective factors. The surest way of discrediting and damaging a new political (and not only political) idea is to reduce it to absurdity on the plea of defending it. For any truth, if "overdone" (as Dietzgen Senior put it), if exaggerated, or if carried beyond the limits of its actual applicability, can be reduced to an absurdity, and is even bound to become an absurdity under these conditions. That is just the kind of disservice the Dutch and German Lefts are rendering to the new truth of the Soviet form of government being superior to bourgeois-democratic parliaments. Of course, anyone would be in error who voiced the outmoded viewpoint or in general considered it impermissible, in all and any circumstances, to reject participation in bourgeois parliaments. I cannot attempt here to formulate the conditions under which a boycott is useful, since the object of this pamphlet is far more modest, namely, to study Russian experience in connection with certain topical questions of international communist tactics. Russian experience has provided us with one successful and correct instance (1905), and another that was incorrect (1906), of the use of a boycott by the Bolsheviks. Analysing the first case, we see that we succeeded in *preventing* a reactionary government from *convening* a reactionary parliament in a situation in which extra-parliamentary revolutionary mass action (strikes in particular) was developing at great speed, when not a single section of the proletariat and the peasantry could support the reactionary government in any way, and when the revolutionary proletariat was

gaining influence over the backward masses through the strike struggle and through the agrarian movement. It is quite obvious that *this* experience is not applicable to present-day European conditions. It is likewise quite obvious—and the foregoing arguments bear this out—that the advocacy, even if with reservations, by the Dutch and the other “Lefts” of refusal to participate in parliaments is fundamentally wrong and detrimental to the cause of the revolutionary proletariat.

In Western Europe and America, parliament has become most odious to the revolutionary vanguard of the working class. That cannot be denied. It can readily be understood, for it is difficult to imagine anything more infamous vile or treacherous than the behaviour of the vast majority of socialist and Social-Democratic parliamentary deputies during and after the war. It would, however, be not only unreasonable but actually criminal to yield to this mood when deciding *how* this generally recognised evil should be fought. In many countries of Western Europe, the revolutionary mood, we might say, is at present a “novelty”, or a “rarity”, which has all too long been vainly and impatiently awaited; perhaps that is why people so easily yield to that mood. Certainly, without a revolutionary mood among the masses, and without conditions facilitating the growth of this mood, revolutionary tactics will never develop into action. In Russia, however, lengthy, painful and sanguinary experience has taught us the truth that revolutionary tactics cannot be built on a revolutionary mood alone. Tactics must be based on a sober and strictly objective appraisal of *all* the class forces in a particular state (and of the states that surround it, and of all states the world over) as well as of the experience of revolutionary movements. It is very easy to show one’s “revolutionary” temper merely by hurling abuse at parliamentary opportunism, or merely by repudiating participation in parliaments; its very ease, however, cannot turn this into a solution of a difficult, a very difficult, problem. It is far more difficult to create a really revolutionary parliamentary group in a European parliament than it was in Russia. That stands to reason. But it is only a particular expression of the general truth that it was easy for Russia, in the specific and historically unique situation of 1917, to *start* the socialist revolution, but it will be more difficult for Russia than for the European countries to *continue* the revolution and bring it to its consummation. I had occasion to point this out already at the beginning of 1918, and our experience of the past two years has entirely confirmed the correctness of this view. Certain specific conditions, viz., (1) the possibility of linking up the Soviet revolution with the ending, as a consequence of this revolution, of the imperialist war, which had exhausted the workers and

peasants to an incredible degree; (2) the possibility of taking temporary advantage of the mortal conflict between the world's two most powerful groups of imperialist robbers, who were unable to unite against their Soviet enemy; (3) the possibility of enduring a comparatively lengthy civil war, partly owing to the enormous size of the country and to the poor means of communication; (4) the existence of such a profound bourgeois-democratic revolutionary movement among the peasantry that the party of the proletariat was able to adopt the revolutionary demands of the peasant party (the Socialist-Revolutionary Party, the majority of whose members were definitely hostile to Bolshevism) and realise them at once, thanks to the conquest of political power by the proletariat—all these specific conditions do not at present exist in Western Europe, and a repetition of such or similar conditions will not occur so easily. Incidentally, apart from a number of other causes, that is why it is more difficult for Western Europe to *start* a socialist revolution than it was for us. To attempt to "circumvent" this difficulty by "skipping" the arduous job of utilising reactionary parliaments for revolutionary purposes is absolutely childish. You want to create a new society, yet you fear the difficulties involved in forming a good parliamentary group made up of convinced, devoted and heroic Communists, in a reactionary parliament! Is that not childish? If Karl Liebknecht in Germany and Z. Höglund in Sweden were able, even without mass support from below, to set examples of the truly revolutionary utilisation of reactionary parliaments, why should a rapidly growing revolutionary mass party, in the midst of the post-war disillusionment and embitterment of the masses, be unable to *forge* a communist group in the worst of parliaments? It is because, in Western Europe, the backward masses of the workers and—to an even greater degree—of the small peasants are much more imbued with bourgeois-democratic and parliamentary prejudices than they were in Russia; because of that, it is *only* from within such institutions as bourgeois parliaments that Communists can (and must) wage a long and persistent struggle, undaunted by any difficulties, to expose, dispel and overcome these prejudices.

The German "Lefts" complain of bad "leaders" in their party, give way to despair, and even arrive at a ridiculous "negation" of "leaders". But in conditions in which it is often necessary to hide "leaders" underground, the *evolution* of good "leaders", reliable, tested and authoritative, is a very difficult matter; these difficulties *cannot* be successfully overcome without combining legal and illegal work, and *without testing the "leaders", among other ways*, in parliaments. Criticism—the most keen, ruthless and uncompromising criticism—should be directed, not

against parliamentarianism or parliamentary activities, but against those leaders who are unable—and still more against those who are *unwilling*—to utilise parliamentary elections and the parliamentary rostrum in a revolutionary and communist manner. Only such criticism—combined, of course, with the dismissal of incapable leaders and their replacement by capable ones—will constitute useful and fruitful revolutionary work that will simultaneously train the “leaders” to be worthy of the working class and of all working people, and train the masses to be able properly to understand the political situation and the often very complicated and intricate tasks that spring from that situation.\*

## VIII

### NO COMPROMISES?

In the quotation from the Frankfurt pamphlet, we have seen how emphatically the “Lefts” have advanced this slogan. It is sad to see people who no doubt consider themselves Marxists, and want to be Marxists, forget the fundamental truths of Marxism. This is what Engels—who, like Marx, was one of those rarest of authors whose every sentence in every one of their fundamental works contains a remarkably profound content—wrote in 1874, against the manifesto of the thirty-three Blanquist Communards:

“We are Communists [the Blanquist Communards wrote in their manifesto], because we want to attain our goal without stopping at intermediate stations.

I have had too little opportunity to acquaint myself with “Left-wing” communism in Italy. Comrade Bordiga and his faction of Abstentionist Communists (*Comunista astensionista*) are certainly wrong in advocating non-participation in parliament. But on one point, it seems to me, Comrade Bordiga is right—as far as can be judged from two issues of his paper, *Il Soviet*<sup>144</sup> (Nos. 3 and 4, January 18 and February 1, 1920), from four issues of Comrade Serrati’s excellent periodical, *Comunismo*<sup>145</sup> (Nos. 1-4, October 1-November 30, 1919), and from separate issues of Italian bourgeois papers which I have seen. Comrade Bordiga and his group are right in attacking Turati and his partisans, who remain in a party which has recognised Soviet power and the dictatorship of the proletariat, and yet continue their former pernicious and opportunist policy as members of parliament. Of course, in tolerating this, Comrade Serrati and the entire Italian Socialist Party<sup>146</sup> are making a mistake which threatens to do as much harm and give rise to the same dangers as it did in Hungary, where the Hungarian Turatis sabotaged both the party and the Soviet government<sup>147</sup> from within. Such a mistaken, inconsistent, or spineless attitude towards the opportunist parliamentarians gives rise to “Left-wing” communism, on the one hand, and *to a certain extent* justifies its existence, on the other. Comrade Serrati is obviously wrong when he accuses Deputy Turati of being “inconsistent” (*Comunismo* No. 3), for it is the Italian Socialist Party itself that is inconsistent in tolerating such opportunist parliamentarians as Turati and Co.

without any compromises, which only postpone the day of victory and prolong the period of slavery.'

"The German Communists are Communists because, through all the intermediate stations and all compromises created, not by them but by the course of historical development, they clearly perceive and constantly pursue the final aim—the abolition of classes and the creation of a society in which there will no longer be private ownership of land or of the means of production. The thirty-three Blanquists are Communists just because they imagine that, merely because *they* want to skip the intermediate stations and compromises, the matter is settled, and if 'it begins' in the next few days—which they take for granted—and they take over power, 'communism will be introduced' the day after tomorrow. If that is not immediately possible, they are not Communists.

"What childish innocence it is to present one's own impatience as a theoretically convincing argument!" (Frederick Engels, "Programme of the Blanquist Communards",<sup>148</sup> from the German Social-Democratic newspaper *Volksstaat*,<sup>149</sup> 1874, No. 73, given in the Russian translation, *Articles, 1871-1875*, Petrograd, 1919, pp. 52-53.)

In the same article, Engels expresses his profound esteem for Vaillant, and speaks of the "unquestionable merit" of the latter (who, like Guesde, was one of the most prominent leaders of international socialism until their betrayal of socialism in August 1914). But Engels does not fail to give a detailed analysis of an obvious error. Of course, to very young and inexperienced revolutionaries, as well as to petty-bourgeois revolutionaries of even very respectable age and great experience, it seems extremely "dangerous", incomprehensible and wrong to "permit compromises". Many sophists (being unusually or excessively "experienced" politicians) reason exactly in the same way as the British leaders of opportunism mentioned by Comrade Lansbury: "If the Bolsheviks are permitted a certain compromise, why should we not be permitted any kind of compromise?" However, proletarians schooled in numerous strikes (to take only this manifestation of the class struggle) usually assimilate in admirable fashion the very profound truth (philosophical, historical, political and psychological) expounded by Engels. Every proletarian has been through strikes and has experienced "compromises" with the hated oppressors and exploiters, when the workers have had to return to work either without having achieved anything or else agreeing to only a partial satisfaction of their demands. Every proletarian—as a result of the conditions of the mass struggle and the acute intensification of class antagonisms he lives among—sees the difference between a compromise enforced by objective conditions (such as lack of strike funds, no outside support, starva-

tion and exhaustion)—a compromise which in no way minimises the revolutionary devotion and readiness to carry on the struggle on the part of the workers who have agreed to such a compromise—and, on the other hand, a compromise by traitors who try to ascribe to objective causes their self-interest (strike-breakers also enter into “compromises”!). their cowardice, desire to toady to the capitalists, and readiness to yield to intimidation, sometimes to persuasion, sometimes to sops, and sometimes to flattery from the capitalists. (The history of the British labour movement provides a very large number of instances of such treacherous compromises by British trade union leaders, but, in one form or another, almost all workers in all countries have witnessed the same sort of thing.)

Naturally, there are individual cases of exceptional difficulty and complexity, when the greatest efforts are necessary for a proper assessment of the actual character of this or that “compromise”, just as there are cases of homicide when it is by no means easy to establish whether the homicide was fully justified and even necessary (as, for example, legitimate self-defence), or due to unpardonable negligence, or even to a cunningly executed perfidious plan. Of course, in politics, where it is sometimes a matter of extremely complex relations—national and international—between classes and parties, very many cases will arise that will be much more difficult than the question of a legitimate “compromise” in a strike or a treacherous “compromise” by a strike-breaker, treacherous leader, etc. It would be absurd to formulate a recipe or general rule (“No compromises!”) to suit all cases. One must use one’s own brains and be able to find one’s bearings in each particular instance. It is, in fact, one of the functions of a party organisation and of party leaders worthy of the name, to acquire, through the prolonged, persistent, varied and comprehensive efforts of all thinking representatives of a given class,\* the knowledge, experience and—in addition to knowledge and experience—the political flair necessary for the speedy and correct solution of complex political problems.

Naïve and quite inexperienced people imagine that the permissibility of compromise *in general* is sufficient to obliterate any distinction between opportunism, against which we are waging, and must wage, an unrelenting struggle, and revolutionary Marx-

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\* Within every class, even in the conditions prevailing in the most enlightened countries, even within the most advanced class, and even when the circumstances of the moment have aroused all its spiritual forces to an exceptional degree, there always are—and inevitably *will be* as long as classes exist, as long as a classless society has not fully consolidated itself, and has not developed on its own foundations—representatives of the class who do *not* think, and are incapable of thinking, for themselves. Capitalism would not be the oppressor of the masses that it actually is, if things were otherwise

ism, or communism. But if such people do not yet know that in nature and in society *all* distinctions are fluid and up to a certain point conventional, nothing can help them but lengthy training, education, enlightenment, and political and everyday experience. In the practical questions that arise in the politics of any particular or specific historical moment, it is important to single out those which display the principal type of intolerable and treacherous compromises, such as embody an opportunism that is fatal to the revolutionary class, and to exert all efforts to explain them and combat them. During the 1914-18 imperialist war between two groups of equally predatory countries, social-chauvinism was the principal and fundamental type of opportunism, i.e., support of "defence of country", which in *such* a war was really equivalent to defence of the predatory interests of one's "own" bourgeoisie. After the war, defence of the robber League of Nations, defence of direct or indirect alliances with the bourgeoisie of one's own country against the revolutionary proletariat and the "Soviet" movement, and defence of bourgeois democracy and bourgeois parliamentarianism against "Soviet power" became the principal manifestations of those intolerable and treacherous compromises, whose sum total constituted an opportunism fatal to the revolutionary proletariat and its cause.

"... All compromise with other parties ... any policy of manoeuvring and compromise must be emphatically rejected."

the German Lefts write in the Frankfurt pamphlet.

It is surprising that, with such views, these Lefts do not emphatically condemn Bolshevism! After all, the German Lefts cannot but know that the entire history of Bolshevism, both before and after the October Revolution, is *full* of instances of changes of tack, conciliatory tactics and compromises with other parties, including bourgeois parties!

To carry on a war for the overthrow of the international bourgeoisie, a war which is a hundred times more difficult, protracted and complex than the most stubborn of ordinary wars between states, and to renounce in advance any change of tack, or any utilisation of a conflict of interests (even if temporary) among one's enemies, or any conciliation or compromise with possible allies (even if they are temporary, unstable, vacillating or conditional allies)—is that not ridiculous in the extreme? Is it not like making a difficult ascent of an unexplored and hitherto inaccessible mountain and refusing to advance ever to move in zigzags, ever to retrace one's steps, or ever to abandon a course once selected, and to try others? And yet people so immature and inexperienced (if youth were the explanation, it would not be so bad; young people are preordained to talk such nonsense for a certain period) have met with support—whether direct or



indirect, open or covert, whole or partial, it does not matter—from some members of the Communist Party of Holland.

After the first socialist revolution of the proletariat, and the overthrow of the bourgeoisie in some country, the proletariat of that country remains *for a long time weaker* than the bourgeoisie, simply because of the latter's extensive international links, and also because of the spontaneous and continuous restoration and regeneration of capitalism and the bourgeoisie by the small commodity producers of the country which has overthrown the bourgeoisie. The more powerful enemy can be vanquished only by exerting the utmost effort, and by the most thorough, careful, attentive, skilful and *obligatory* use of any, even the smallest, rift between the enemies, any conflict of interests among the bourgeoisie of the various countries and among the various groups or types of bourgeoisie within the various countries, and also by taking advantage of any, even the smallest, opportunity of winning a mass ally, even though this ally is temporary, vacillating, unstable, unreliable and conditional. Those who do not understand this reveal a failure to understand even the smallest grain of Marxism, of modern scientific socialism *in general*. Those who have not proved *in practice*, over a fairly considerable period of time and in fairly varied political situations, their ability to apply this truth in practice have not yet learned to help the revolutionary class in its struggle to emancipate all toiling humanity from the exploiters. And this applies equally to the period *before* and *after* the proletariat has won political power.

Our theory is not a dogma, but a *guide to action*, said Marx and Engels.<sup>150</sup> The greatest blunder, the greatest crime, committed by such "out-and-out" Marxists as Karl Kautsky, Otto Bauer, etc., is that they have not understood this and have been unable to apply it at crucial moments of the proletarian revolution. "Political activity is not like the pavement of Nevsky Prospekt" (the well-kept, broad and level pavement of the perfectly straight principal thoroughfare of St. Petersburg), N. G. Chernyshevsky,<sup>151</sup> the great Russian socialist of the pre-Marxist period, used to say. Since Chernyshevsky's time, disregard or forgetfulness of this truth has cost Russian revolutionaries countless sacrifices. We must strive at all costs to *prevent* the Left Communists and West-European and American revolutionaries that are devoted to the working class from paying *as dearly* as the backward Russians did to learn this truth.

Prior to the downfall of tsarism, the Russian revolutionary Social-Democrats made repeated use of the services of the bourgeois liberals, i.e., they concluded numerous practical compromises with the latter. In 1901-02, even prior to the appearance of Bolshevism, the old editorial board of *Iskra* (consisting of

Plekhanov, Axelrod, Zasulich, Martov, Potresov and myself) concluded (not for long, it is true) a formal political alliance with Struve, the political leader of bourgeois liberalism, while at the same time being able to wage an unremitting and most merciless ideological and political struggle against bourgeois liberalism and against the slightest manifestations of its influence in the working-class movement. The Bolsheviks have always adhered to this policy. Since 1905 they have systematically advocated an alliance between the working class and the peasantry, against the liberal bourgeoisie and tsarism, never, however, refusing to support the bourgeoisie against tsarism (for instance, during second rounds of elections, or during second ballots) and never ceasing their relentless ideological and political struggle against the Socialist-Revolutionaries, the bourgeois-revolutionary peasant party, exposing them as petty-bourgeois democrats who have falsely described themselves as socialists. During the Duma elections of 1907, the Bolsheviks entered briefly into a formal political bloc with the Socialist-Revolutionaries. Between 1903 and 1912, there were periods of several years in which we were formally united with the Mensheviks in a single Social-Democratic Party, but we *never stopped* our ideological and political struggle against them as opportunists and vehicles of bourgeois influence on the proletariat. During the war, we concluded certain compromises with the Kautskyites, with the Left Mensheviks (Martov), and with a section of the Socialist-Revolutionaries (Chernov and Natanson); we were together with them at Zimmerwald and Kienthal,<sup>152</sup> and issued joint manifestos. However, we never ceased and never relaxed our ideological and political struggle against the Kautskyites, Martov and Chernov (when Natanson died in 1919, a "Revolutionary-Communist" Narodnik,<sup>153</sup> he was very close to and almost in agreement with us). At the very moment of the October Revolution, we entered into an informal but very important (and very successful) political bloc with the petty-bourgeois peasantry by adopting the *Socialist-Revolutionary* agrarian programme *in its entirety*, without a single alteration—i.e., we effected an undeniable compromise in order to prove to the peasants that we wanted, not to "steam-roller" them but to reach agreement with them. At the same time we proposed (and soon after effected) a formal political bloc, including participation in the government, with the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries,<sup>154</sup> who dissolved this bloc after the conclusion of the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk and then, in July 1918, went to the length of armed rebellion, and subsequently of an armed struggle, against us.

It is therefore understandable why the attacks made by the German Lefts against the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Germany for entertaining the idea of a bloc with the

Independents (the Independent Social-Democratic Party of Germany—the Kautskyites) are absolutely inane, in our opinion, and clear proof that the “Lefts” are in the *wrong*. In Russia, too, there were Right Mensheviks (participants in the Kerensky government), who corresponded to the German Scheidemanns, and Left Mensheviks (Martov), corresponding to the German Kautskyites and standing in opposition to the Right Mensheviks. A gradual shift of the worker masses from the Mensheviks over to the Bolsheviks was to be clearly seen in 1917. At the First All-Russia Congress of Soviets, held in June 1917, we had only 13 per cent of the votes; the Socialist-Revolutionaries and the Mensheviks had a majority. At the Second Congress of Soviets (October 25, 1917, old style) we had 51 per cent of the votes. Why is it that in Germany the *same* and absolutely *identical* shift of the workers from Right to Left did not immediately strengthen the Communists, but first strengthened the midway Independent Party, although the latter never had independent political ideas or an independent policy, but merely wavered between the Scheidemanns and the Communists?

One of the evident reasons was the *erroneous* tactics of the German Communists, who must fearlessly and honestly admit this error and learn to rectify it. The error consisted in their denial of the need to take part in the reactionary bourgeois parliaments and in the reactionary trade unions; the error consisted in numerous manifestations of the “Left-wing” infantile disorder which has now come to the surface and will consequently be cured the more thoroughly, the more rapidly and with greater advantage to the organism.

The German Independent Social-Democratic Party is obviously not a homogeneous body. Alongside the old opportunist leaders (Kautsky, Hilferding and apparently, to a considerable extent, Crispien, Ledebour and others)—these have revealed their inability to understand the significance of Soviet power and the dictatorship of the proletariat, and their inability to lead the proletariat’s revolutionary struggle—there has emerged in this party a Left and proletarian wing, which is growing most rapidly. Hundreds of thousands of members of this party (which has, I think, a membership of some three-quarters of a million) are proletarians who are abandoning Scheidemann and are rapidly going over to communism. This proletarian wing has already proposed—at the Leipzig Congress of the Independents (1919)—immediate and unconditional affiliation to the Third International. To fear a “compromise” with this wing of the party is positively ridiculous. On the contrary, it is the *duty* of Communists to seek *and find* a suitable form of compromise with them, a compromise which, on the one hand, will facilitate and ac-

celerate the necessary complete fusion with this wing and, on the other, will in no way hamper the Communists in their ideological and political struggle against the opportunist Right wing of the Independents. It will probably be no easy matter to devise a suitable form of compromise—but only a charlatan could promise the German workers and the German Communists an "easy" road to victory.

Capitalism would not be capitalism if the proletariat *pur sang* were not surrounded by a large number of exceedingly motley types intermediate between the proletarian and the semi-proletarian (who earns his livelihood in part by the sale of his labour-power), between the semi-proletarian and the small peasant (and petty artisan, handicraft worker and small master in general), between the small peasant and the middle peasant, and so on, and if the proletariat itself were not divided into more developed and less developed strata, if it were not divided according to territorial origin, trade, sometimes according to religion, and so on. From all this follows the necessity, the absolute necessity, for the Communist Party, the vanguard of the proletariat, its class-conscious section, to resort to changes of tack, to conciliation and compromises with the various groups of proletarians, with the various parties of the workers and small masters. It is entirely a matter of *knowing how* to apply these tactics in order to *raise*—not lower—the general level of proletarian class-consciousness, revolutionary spirit, and ability to fight and win. Incidentally, it should be noted that the Bolsheviks' victory over the Mensheviks called for the application of tactics of changes of tack, conciliation and compromises, not only before *but also after* the October Revolution of 1917, but the changes of tack and compromises were, of course, such as assisted, boosted and consolidated the Bolsheviks at the expense of the Mensheviks. The petty-bourgeois democrats (including the Mensheviks) inevitably vacillate between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat, between bourgeois democracy and the Soviet system, between reformism and revolutionism, between love for the workers and fear of the proletarian dictatorship, etc. The Communists' proper tactics should consist in *utilising* these vacillations, not ignoring them; utilising them calls for concessions to elements that are turning towards the proletariat—whenever and in the measure that they turn towards the proletariat—in addition to fighting those who turn towards the bourgeoisie. As a result of the application of the correct tactics, Menshevism began to disintegrate, and has been disintegrating more and more in our country; the stubbornly opportunist leaders are being isolated, and the best of the workers and the best elements among the petty-bourgeois democrats are being brought into our camp. This is a lengthy process, and the hasty "decision"—"No compromises, no

manoeuvres"—can only prejudice the strengthening of the revolutionary proletariat's influence and the enlargement of its forces.

Lastly, one of the undoubted errors of the German "Lefts" lies in their downright refusal to recognise the Treaty of Versailles. The more "weightily" and "pompously", the more "emphatically" and peremptorily this viewpoint is formulated (by K. Horner, for instance), the less sense it seems to make. It is not enough, under the present conditions of the international proletarian revolution, to repudiate the preposterous absurdities of "National Bolshevism" (Laufenberg and others), which has gone to the length of advocating a bloc with the German bourgeoisie for a war against the Entente. One must realise that it is utterly false tactics to refuse to admit that a Soviet Germany (if a German Soviet republic were soon to arise) would have to recognise the Treaty of Versailles<sup>155</sup> for a time, and to submit to it. From this it does not follow that the Independents—at a time when the Scheidemanns were in the government, when the Soviet government in Hungary had not yet been overthrown, and when it was still possible that a Soviet revolution in Vienna would support Soviet Hungary—were right, *under the circumstances*, in putting forward the demand that the Treaty of Versailles should be signed. At that time the Independents tacked and manoeuvred very clumsily, for they more or less accepted responsibility for the Scheidemann traitors, and more or less backslid from advocacy of a ruthless (and most calmly conducted) class war against the Scheidemanns, to advocacy of a "classless" or "above-class" standpoint.

In the present situation, however, the German Communists should obviously not deprive themselves of freedom of action by giving a positive and categorical promise to repudiate the Treaty of Versailles in the event of communism's victory. That would be absurd. They should say: the Scheidemanns and the Kautskyites have committed a number of acts of treachery hindering (and in part quite ruining) the chances of an alliance with Soviet Russia and Soviet Hungary. We Communists will do all we can to *facilitate* and *pave the way* for such an alliance. However, we are in no way obligated to repudiate the Treaty of Versailles, come what may, or to do so at once. The possibility of its successful repudiation will depend, not only on the German, but also on the international successes of the Soviet movement. The Scheidemanns and the Kautskyites have hampered this movement; we are helping it. That is the gist of the matter; therein lies the fundamental difference. And if our class enemies, the exploiters and their Scheidemann and Kautskyite lackeys, have missed many an opportunity of strengthening both the German and the international Soviet movement, of strengthening both the German and the international Soviet revolution, the blame lies with them. The Soviet

revolution in Germany will strengthen the international Soviet movement, which is the strongest bulwark (and the only reliable, invincible and world-wide bulwark) against the Treaty of Versailles and against international imperialism in general. To give absolute, categorical and immediate precedence to liberation from the Treaty of Versailles and to give it *precedence over the question* of liberating *other* countries oppressed by imperialism, from the yoke of imperialism, is philistine nationalism (worthy of the Kautskys, the Hilferdings, the Otto Bauers and Co.), not revolutionary internationalism. The overthrow of the bourgeoisie in any of the large European countries, including Germany, would be such a gain for the international revolution that, for its sake, one can and if necessary should, tolerate a *more prolonged existence of the Treaty of Versailles*. If Russia, standing alone, could endure the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk for several months, to the advantage of the revolution, there is nothing impossible in a Soviet Germany, allied with Soviet Russia, enduring the existence of the Treaty of Versailles for a longer period, to the advantage of the revolution.

The imperialists of France, Britain, etc., are trying to provoke and ensnare the German Communists: "Say that you will not sign the Treaty of Versailles!" they urge. Like babes, the Left Communists fall into the trap laid for them, instead of skilfully manoeuvring against the crafty and, *at present*, stronger enemy, and instead of telling him, "We shall sign the Treaty of Versailles now." It is folly, not revolutionism, to deprive ourselves in advance of any freedom of action, openly to inform an enemy who is at present better armed than we are whether we shall fight him, and when. To accept battle at a time when it is obviously advantageous to the enemy, but not to us, is criminal; political leaders of the revolutionary class are absolutely useless if they are incapable of "changing tack, or offering conciliation and compromise" in order to take evasive action in a patently disadvantageous battle.

## IX

### "LEFT-WING" COMMUNISM IN GREAT BRITAIN

There is no Communist Party in Great Britain as yet, but there is a fresh, broad, powerful and rapidly growing communist movement among the workers, which justifies the best hopes. There are several political parties and organisations (the British Socialist Party,<sup>156</sup> the Socialist Labour Party, the South Wales Socialist Society, the Workers' Socialist Federation<sup>157</sup>), which desire to form a Communist Party and are already negotiating among themselves to this end. In its issue of February 21, 1920, Vol. VI,

No. 48, *The Workers' Dreadnought*,<sup>158</sup> weekly organ of the last of the organisations mentioned, carried an article by the editor, Comrade Sylvia Pankhurst, entitled "Towards a Communist Party". The article outlines the progress of the negotiations between the four organisations mentioned, for the formation of a united Communist Party, on the basis of affiliation to the Third International, the recognition of the Soviet system instead of parliamentarianism, and the recognition of the dictatorship of the proletariat. It appears that one of the greatest obstacles to the immediate formation of a united Communist Party is presented by the disagreement on the questions of participation in Parliament and on whether the new Communist Party should affiliate to the old, trade-unionist, opportunist and social-chauvinist Labour Party, which is mostly made up of trade unions. The Workers' Socialist Federation and the Socialist Labour Party\* are opposed to taking part in parliamentary elections and in Parliament, and they are opposed to affiliation to the Labour Party; in this they disagree with all or with most of the members of the British Socialist Party, which they regard as the "Right wing of the Communist parties" in Great Britain. (Page 5, Sylvia Pankhurst's article.)

Thus, the main division is the same as in Germany, notwithstanding the enormous difference in the forms in which the disagreements manifest themselves (in Germany the form is far closer to the "Russian" than it is in Great Britain), and in a number of other things. Let us examine the arguments of the "Lefts".

On the question of participation in Parliament, Comrade Sylvia Pankhurst refers to an article in the same issue, by Comrade Gallacher, who writes in the name of the Scottish Workers' Council in Glasgow.

"The above council," he writes, "is definitely anti-parliamentarian, and has behind it the Left wing of the various political bodies. We represent the revolutionary movement in Scotland, striving continually to build up a revolutionary organisation within the industries [in various branches of production], and a Communist Party, based on social committees, throughout the country. For a considerable time we have been sparring with the official parliamentarians. We have not considered it necessary to declare open warfare on them, and they are *afraid* to open an attack on us.

"But this state of affairs cannot long continue. We are winning all along the line.

"The rank and file of the I.L.P. in Scotland is becoming more and more disgusted with the thought of Parliament, and the Soviets [the Russian word transliterated into English is used] or Workers' Councils are being supported by almost every branch. This is very serious, of course, for the gentlemen who look to politics for a profession, and they are using any and every means to persuade their members to come back into the parliamentary fold. Revolution-

\* I believe this party is opposed to affiliation to the Labour Party but not all its members are opposed to participation in Parliament.

any comrades *must not* [all italics are the author's] give any support to this gang. Our fight here is going to be a difficult one. One of the worst features of it will be the treachery of those whose personal ambition is a more impelling force than their regard for the revolution. Any support given to parliamentarism is simply assisting to put power into the hands of our British Scheidemanns and Noskes, Henderson, Clynes and Co. are hopelessly reactionary. The official I.L.P. is more and more coming under the control of middle-class liberals, who have found their 'spiritual home' in the camp of Messrs MacDonald, Snowden and Co. The official I.L.P. is bitterly hostile to the Third International, the rank and file is for it. Any support to the parliamentary opportunists is simply playing into the hands of the former. The B.S.P. doesn't count at all here. . . . What is wanted here is a sound revolutionary industrial organisation, and a Communist Party working along clear, well-defined, scientific lines. If our comrades can assist us in building these, we will take their help gladly; if they cannot, for God's sake let them keep out altogether, lest they betray the revolution by lending their support to the reactionaries, who are so eagerly clamouring for parliamentary 'honours' (?) [the query mark is the author's] and who are so anxious to prove that they *can rule* as effectively as the 'boss' class politicians themselves."

In my opinion, this letter to the editor expresses excellently the temper and point of view of the young Communists, or of rank-and-file workers who are only just beginning to accept communism. This temper is highly gratifying and valuable; we must learn to appreciate and support it for, in its absence, it would be hopeless to expect the victory of the proletarian revolution in Great Britain, or in any other country for that matter. People who can give expression to this temper of the masses, and are able to evoke such a temper (which is very often dormant, unconscious and latent) among the masses, should be appreciated and given every assistance. At the same time, we must tell them openly and frankly that a state of mind is *by itself* insufficient for leadership of the masses in a great revolutionary struggle, and that the cause of the revolution may well be harmed by certain errors that people who are most devoted to the cause of the revolution are about to commit or are committing. Comrade Gallacher's letter undoubtedly reveals the rudiments of *all* the mistakes that are being made by the German "Left" Communists and were made by the Russian "Left" Bolsheviks in 1908 and 1918.

The writer of the letter is full of a noble and working-class hatred for the bourgeois "class politicians" (a hatred understood and shared, however, not only by proletarians but by all working people, by all *Kleinen Leuten*\* to use the German expression). In a representative of the oppressed and exploited masses, this hatred is truly the "beginning of a wisdom", the basis of any socialist and communist movement and of its success. The writer, however, has apparently lost sight of the fact that politics is a science and an art that does not fall from the skies or come gratis,



and that, if it wants to overcome the bourgeoisie, the proletariat must train its *own* proletarian "class politicians", of a kind in no way inferior to bourgeois politicians.

The writer of the letter fully realises that only workers' Soviets, not parliament, can be the instrument enabling the proletariat to achieve its aims; those who have failed to understand this are, of course, out-and-out reactionaries, even if they are most highly educated people, most experienced politicians, most sincere socialists, most erudite Marxists, and most honest citizens and fathers of families. But the writer of the letter does not even ask—it does not occur to him to ask—whether it is possible to bring about the Soviets' victory over parliament without getting pro-Soviet politicians *into* parliament, without disintegrating parliamentarianism from *within*, without working within parliament for the success of the Soviets in their forthcoming task of dispersing parliament. Yet the writer of the letter expresses the absolutely correct idea that the Communist Party in Great Britain must act on *scientific* principles. Science demands, first, that the experience of other countries be taken into account, especially if these other countries, which are also capitalist, are undergoing, or have recently undergone, a very similar experience; second, it demands that account be taken of *all* the forces, groups, parties, classes and masses operating in a given country, and also that policy should not be determined only by the desires and views, by the degree of class-consciousness and the militancy of one group or party alone.

It is true that the Hendersons, the Clyneses, the MacDonalds and the Snowdens are hopelessly reactionary. It is equally true that they want to assume power (though they would prefer a coalition with the bourgeoisie), that they want to "rule" along the old bourgeois lines, and that when they are in power they will certainly behave like the Scheidemanns and Noskes. All that is true. But it does not at all follow that to support them means treachery to the revolution; what does follow is that, in the interests of the revolution, working-class revolutionaries should give these gentlemen a certain amount of parliamentary support. To explain this idea, I shall take two contemporary British political documents: (1) the speech delivered by Prime Minister Lloyd George on March 18, 1920 (as reported in *The Manchester Guardian*<sup>19</sup>) of March 19, 1920), and (2) the arguments of a "Left" Communist, Comrade Sylvia Pankhurst, in the article mentioned above.

In his speech Lloyd George entered into a polemic with Asquith (who had been especially invited to this meeting but declined to attend) and with those Liberals who want, not a coalition with the Conservatives, but closer relations with the Labour Party. (In the above-quoted letter, Comrade Gallacher also points to the fact that Liberals are joining the Independent Labour Party.)

Lloyd George argued that a coalition—and a *close* coalition at that—between the Liberals and the Conservatives was essential, otherwise there might be a victory for the Labour Party, which Lloyd George prefers to call "Socialist" and which is working for the "common ownership" of the means of production. "It is . . . known as communism in France," the leader of the British bourgeoisie said, putting it popularly for his audience, Liberal M.P.s who probably never knew it before. In Germany it was called socialism, and in Russia it is called Bolshevism, he went on to say. To Liberals this is unacceptable on principle, Lloyd George explained, because they stand in principle for private property. "Civilisation is in jeopardy," the speaker declared, and consequently Liberals and Conservatives must unite. . . .

"...If you go to the agricultural areas" said Lloyd George, "I agree you have the old party divisions as strong as ever. They are removed from the danger. It does not walk their lanes. But when they see it they will be as strong as some of these industrial constituencies are now. Four-fifths of this country is industrial and commercial; hardly one-fifth is agricultural. It is one of the things I have constantly in my mind when I think of the dangers of the future here. In France the population is agricultural, and you have a solid body of opinion which does not move very rapidly, and which is not very easily excited by revolutionary movements. That is not the case here. This country is more top-heavy than any country in the world, and if it begins to rock, the crash here, for that reason, will be greater than in any land."

From this the reader will see that Mr. Lloyd George is not only a very intelligent man, but one who has also learned a great deal from the Marxists. We too have something to learn from Lloyd George.

Of definite interest is the following episode, which occurred in the course of the discussion after Lloyd George's speech:

"*Mr. Wallace, M.P.*: I should like to ask what the Prime Minister considers the effect might be in the industrial constituencies upon the industrial workers, so many of whom are Liberals at the present time and from whom we get so much support. Would not a possible result be to cause an immediate overwhelming accession of strength to the Labour Party from men who at present are our cordial supporters?"

"*The Prime Minister*: I take a totally different view. The fact that Liberals are fighting among themselves undoubtedly drives a very considerable number of Liberals in despair to the Labour Party, where you get a considerable body of Liberals, very able men, whose business it is to discredit the Government. The result is undoubtedly to bring a good accession of public sentiment to the Labour Party. It does not go to the Liberals who are outside, it goes to the Labour Party the by-elections show that."

It may be said, in passing, that this argument shows in particular how muddled even the most intelligent members of the bourgeoisie have become and how they cannot help committing irreparable blunders. That, in fact, is what will bring about the downfall of the bourgeoisie. Our people, however, may commit blunders (provided, of course, that they are not too serious

and are rectified in time) and yet, in the long run, will prove the victors.

The second political document is the following argument advanced by Comrade Sylvia Pankhurst, a "Left" Communist:

"...Comrade Inkpin [the General Secretary of the British Socialist Party] refers to the Labour Party as 'the main body of the working-class movement'. Another comrade of the British Socialist Party, at the Third International, just held, put the British Socialist Party position more strongly. He said: 'We regard the Labour Party as the organised working class.'

"We do not take this view of the Labour Party. The Labour Party is very large numerically though its membership is to a great extent quiescent and apathetic, consisting of men and women who have joined the trade unions because their workmates are trade unionists, and to share the friendly benefits.

"But we recognise that the great size of the Labour Party is also due to the fact that it is the creation of a school of thought beyond which the majority of the British working class has not yet emerged, though great changes are at work in the mind of the people which will presently alter this state of affairs. ...

"The British Labour Party, like the social-patriotic organisations of other countries, will, in the natural development of society, inevitably come into power. It is for the Communists to build up the forces that will overthrow the social patriots, and in this country we must not delay or falter in that work.

"We must not dissipate our energy in adding to the strength of the Labour Party; its rise to power is inevitable. We must concentrate on making a communist movement that will vanquish it. The Labour Party will soon be forming a government; the revolutionary opposition must make ready to attack it...."

Thus the liberal bourgeoisie are abandoning the historical system of "two parties" (of exploiters), which has been hallowed by centuries of experience and has been extremely advantageous to the exploiters, and consider it necessary for these two parties to join forces against the Labour Party. A number of Liberals are deserting to the Labour Party like rats from a sinking ship. The Left Communists believe that the transfer of power to the Labour Party is inevitable and admit that it now has the backing of most workers. From this they draw the strange conclusion which Comrade Sylvia Pankhurst formulates as follows:

"The Communist Party must not compromise.... The Communist Party must keep its doctrine pure, and its independence of reformism inviolate; its mission is to lead the way, without stopping or turning, by the direct road to the communist revolution."

On the contrary, the fact that most British workers still follow the lead of the British Kerenskys or Scheidemanns and have not yet had experience of a government composed of these people—an experience which was necessary in Russia and Germany so as to secure the mass transition of the workers to communism—undoubtedly indicates that the British Communists *should* participate in parliamentary action, that they should, from *within* parliament, help the masses of the workers see the results of a Henderson and Snowden government in practice, and that they

should help the Hendersons and Snowdens defeat the united forces of Lloyd George and Churchill. To act otherwise would mean hampering the cause of the revolution, since revolution is impossible without a change in the views of the majority of the working class; a change brought about by the political experience of the masses, never by propaganda alone. "To lead the way without compromises, without turning"—this slogan is obviously wrong if it comes from a patently impotent minority of the workers who know (or at all events should know) that given a Henderson and Snowden victory over Lloyd George and Churchill, the majority will soon become disappointed in their leaders and will begin to support communism (or at all events will adopt an attitude of neutrality, and, in the main, of sympathetic neutrality, towards the Communists). It is as though 10,000 soldiers were to hurl themselves into battle against an enemy force of 50,000, when it would be proper to "halt", "take evasive action", or even effect a "compromise" so as to gain time until the arrival of the 100,000 reinforcements that are on their way but cannot go into action immediately. That is intellectualist childishness, not the serious tactics of a revolutionary class.

The fundamental law of revolution, which has been confirmed by all revolutions and especially by all three Russian revolutions in the twentieth century, is as follows: for a revolution to take place it is not enough for the exploited and oppressed masses to realise the impossibility of living in the old way, and demand changes; for a revolution to take place it is essential that the exploiters should not be able to live and rule in the old way. It is only when the "*lower classes*" *do not want* to live in the old way and the "*upper classes*" *cannot carry on in the old way* that the revolution can triumph. This truth can be expressed in other words: revolution is impossible without a nation-wide crisis (affecting both the exploited and the exploiters). It follows that, for a revolution to take place, it is essential, first, that a majority of the workers (or at least a majority of the class-conscious, thinking, and politically active workers) should fully realise that revolution is necessary, and that they should be prepared to die for it; second, that the ruling classes should be going through a governmental crisis, which draws even the most backward masses into politics (symptomatic of any genuine revolution is a rapid, tenfold and even hundredfold increase in the size of the working and oppressed masses—hitherto apathetic—who are capable of waging the political struggle), weakens the government, and makes it possible for the revolutionaries to rapidly overthrow it.

Incidentally, as can also be seen from Lloyd George's speech, both conditions for a successful proletarian revolution are clearly maturing in Great Britain. The errors of the Left Communists

are particularly dangerous at present, because certain revolutionaries are not displaying a sufficiently thoughtful, sufficiently attentive, sufficiently intelligent and sufficiently shrewd attitude toward each of these conditions. If we are the party of the revolutionary *class*, and not merely a revolutionary group, and if we want the *masses* to follow us (and unless we achieve that, we stand the risk of remaining mere windbags), we must, first, help Henderson or Snowden to beat Lloyd George and Churchill (or, rather, compel the former to beat the latter, because the former *are afraid of their victory!*); second, we must help the majority of the working class to be convinced by their own experience that we are right, i.e., that the Hendersons and Snowdens are absolutely good for nothing, that they are petty-bourgeois and treacherous by nature, and that their bankruptcy is inevitable; third, we must bring nearer the moment when, *on the basis* of the disappointment of most of the workers in the Hendersons, it will be possible, with serious chances of success, to overthrow the government of the Hendersons at once; because if the most astute and solid Lloyd George, that big, not petty, bourgeois, is displaying consternation and is more and more weakening himself (and the bourgeoisie as a whole) by his "friction" with Churchill today and with Asquith tomorrow, how much greater will be the consternation of a Henderson government!

I will put it more concretely. In my opinion, the British Communists should unite their four parties and groups (all very weak, and some of them very, very weak) into a single Communist Party on the basis of the principles of the Third International and of *obligatory* participation in parliament. The Communist Party should propose the following "compromise" election agreement to the Hendersons and Snowdens: let us jointly fight against the alliance between Lloyd George and the Conservatives; let us share parliamentary seats in proportion to the number of workers' votes polled for the Labour Party and for the Communist Party (not in elections, but in a special ballot), and let us retain *complete freedom* of agitation, propaganda and political activity. Of course, without this latter condition, we cannot agree to a bloc, for that would be treachery; the British Communists must demand and get complete freedom to expose the Hendersons and the Snowdens in the same way as (*for fifteen years—1903-17*) the Russian Bolsheviks demanded and got it in respect of the Russian Hendersons and Snowdens, i.e., the Mensheviks.

If the Hendersons and the Snowdens accept a bloc on these terms, we shall be the gainers, because the number of parliamentary seats is of no importance to us; we are not out for seats. We shall yield on this point (whilst the Hendersons and especially their new friends—or new masters—the Liberals who have joined

the Independent Labour Party are most eager to get seats). We shall be the gainers, because we shall carry *our* agitation among the *masses* at a time when Lloyd George *himself* has "incensed" them, and we shall not only be helping the Labour Party to establish its government sooner, but shall also be helping the masses sooner to understand the communist propaganda that we shall carry on against the Hendersons, without any reticence or omission.

If the Hendersons and the Snowdens reject a bloc with us on these terms, we shall gain still more, for we shall at once have shown the *masses* (note that, even in the purely Menshevik and completely opportunist Independent Labour Party, the *rank and file* are in favour of Soviets) that the Hendersons prefer *their* close relations with the capitalists to the unity of all the workers. We shall immediately gain in the eyes of the *masses*, who, particularly after the brilliant, highly correct and highly useful (to communism) explanations given by Lloyd George, will be sympathetic to the idea of uniting all the workers against the Lloyd George-Conservative alliance. We shall gain immediately, because we shall have demonstrated to the masses that the Hendersons and the Snowdens are afraid to beat Lloyd George, afraid to assume power alone, and are striving to secure the *secret* support of Lloyd George, who is *openly* extending a hand to the Conservatives, against the Labour Party. It should be noted that in Russia, after the revolution of February 27, 1917 (old style), the Bolsheviks' propaganda against the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries (i.e., the Russian Hendersons and Snowdens) derived benefit precisely from a circumstance of this kind. We said to the Mensheviks and the Socialist-Revolutionaries: assume full power without the bourgeoisie, because you have a majority in the Soviets (at the First All-Russia Congress of Soviets, in June 1917, the Bolsheviks had only 13 per cent of the votes). But the Russian Hendersons and Snowdens were afraid to assume power without the bourgeoisie, and when the bourgeoisie held up the elections to the Constituent Assembly, knowing full well that the elections would give a majority to the Socialist-Revolutionaries and the Mensheviks\* (who formed a close political bloc and in fact represented *only* petty-bourgeois democracy), the Socialist Revolutionaries and the Mensheviks were unable energetically and consistently to oppose these delays.

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\* The results of the November 1917 elections to the Constituent Assembly in Russia, based on returns embracing over 36 000,000 voters, were as follows: the Bolsheviks obtained 25 per cent of the votes; the various parties of the landowners and the bourgeoisie obtained 13 per cent, and the petty-bourgeois-democratic parties, i.e., the Socialist-Revolutionaries, Mensheviks and a number of similar small groups obtained 62 per cent.

If the Hendersons and the Snowdens reject a bloc with the Communists, the latter will immediately gain by winning the sympathy of the masses and discrediting the Hendersons and Snowdens; if, as a result, we do lose a few parliamentary seats, it is a matter of no significance to us. We would put up our candidates in a very few but absolutely safe constituencies, namely, constituencies where our candidatures would not give any seats to the Liberals at the expense of the Labour candidates. We would take part in the election campaign, distribute leaflets agitating for communism, and, in *all* constituencies where we have no candidates, we would urge the electors *to vote for the Labour candidate and against the bourgeois candidate*. Comrades Sylvia Pankhurst and Gallacher are mistaken in thinking that this is a betrayal of communism, or a renunciation of the struggle against the social-traitors. On the contrary, the cause of communist revolution would undoubtedly gain thereby.

At present, British Communists very often find it hard even to approach the masses, and even to get a hearing from them. If I come out as a Communist and call upon them to vote for Henderson and against Lloyd George, they will certainly give me a hearing. And I shall be able to explain in a popular manner, not only why the Soviets are better than a parliament and why the dictatorship of the proletariat is better than the dictatorship of Churchill (disguised with the signboard of bourgeois "democracy"), but also that, with my vote, I want to support Henderson in the same way as the rope supports a hanged man—that the impending establishment of a government of the Hendersons will prove that I am right, will bring the masses over to my side, and will hasten the political death of the Hendersons and the Snowdens just as was the case with their kindred spirits in Russia and Germany.

If the objection is raised that these tactics are too "subtle" or too complex for the masses to understand, that these tactics will split and scatter our forces, will prevent us from concentrating them on Soviet revolution, etc., I will reply to the "Left" objectors: don't ascribe your doctrinairism to the masses! The masses in Russia are no doubt no better educated than the masses in Britain; if anything, they are less so. Yet the masses understood the Bolsheviks, and the fact that, in September 1917, *on the eve* of the Soviet revolution, the Bolsheviks put up their candidates for a bourgeois parliament (the Constituent Assembly) and *on the day after* the Soviet revolution, in November 1917, took part in the elections to this Constituent Assembly, which they got rid of on January 5, 1918—this did not hamper the Bolsheviks, but, on the contrary helped them.

I cannot deal here with the second point of disagreement among

the British Communists—the question of affiliation or non-affiliation to the Labour Party. I have too little material at my disposal on this question, which is highly complex because of the unique character of the British Labour Party, whose very structure is so unlike that of the political parties usual in the European continent. It is beyond doubt, however, first, that in this question, too, those who try to deduce the tactics of the revolutionary proletariat from principles such as: "The Communist Party must keep its doctrine pure, and its independence of reformism inviolate; its mission is to lead the way, without stopping or turning, by the direct road to the communist revolution"—will inevitably fall into error. Such principles are merely a repetition of the mistake made by the French Blanquist Communards, who, in 1874, "repudiated" all compromises and all intermediate stages. Second, it is beyond doubt that, in this question too, as always, the task consists in learning to apply the general and basic principles of communism to the *specific relations* between classes and parties, to the *specific features* in the objective development towards communism, which are different in each country and which we must be able to discover, study, and predict.

This, however, should be discussed, not in connection with British communism alone, but in connection with the general conclusions concerning the development of communism in all capitalist countries. We shall now proceed to deal with this subject.

## X

### SEVERAL CONCLUSIONS

The Russian bourgeois revolution of 1905 revealed a highly original turn in world history: in one of the most backward capitalist countries, the strike movement attained a scope and power unprecedented anywhere in the world. In the *first month* of 1905 *alone*, the number of strikers was ten times the *annual* average for the previous decade (1895-1904); from January to October 1905, strikes grew all the time and reached enormous proportions. Under the influence of a number of unique historical conditions, backward Russia was the first to show the world, not only the growth, by leaps and bounds, of the independent activity of the oppressed masses in time of revolution (this had occurred in all great revolutions), but also that the significance of the proletariat is infinitely greater than its proportion in the total population; it showed a combination of the economic strike and the political strike, with the latter developing into an armed



uprising, and the birth of the Soviets, a new form of mass struggle and mass organisation of the classes oppressed by capitalism.

The revolutions of February and October 1917 led to the all-round development of the Soviets on a nation-wide scale and to their victory in the proletarian socialist revolution. In less than two years, the international character of the Soviets, the spread of this form of struggle and organisation to the world working-class movement and the historical mission of the Soviets as the grave-digger, heir and successor of bourgeois parliamentarianism and of bourgeois democracy in general, all became clear.

But that is not all. The history of the working-class movement now shows that, in all countries, it is about to go through (and is already going through) a struggle waged by communism—emergent, gaining strength and advancing towards victory—against, primarily, Menshevism, i.e., opportunism and social-chauvinism (the home brand in each particular country), and then as a complement, so to say, Left-wing communism. The former struggle has developed in all countries, apparently without any exception, as a duel between the Second International (already virtually dead) and the Third International. The latter struggle is to be seen in Germany, Great Britain, Italy, America (at any rate, a certain *section* of the Industrial Workers of the World and of the anarcho-syndicalist trends uphold the errors of Left-wing communism alongside of an almost universal and almost unreserved acceptance of the Soviet system), and in France (the attitude of a section of the former syndicalists towards the political party and parliamentarianism, also alongside of the acceptance of the Soviet system); in other words, the struggle is undoubtedly being waged, not only on an international, but even on a world-wide scale.

But while the working-class movement is everywhere going through what is actually the same kind of preparatory school for victory over the bourgeoisie, it is achieving that development in its *own way* in each country. The big and advanced capitalist countries are travelling this road *far more rapidly* than did Bolshevism, to which history granted fifteen years to prepare itself for victory, as an organised political trend. In the brief space of a year, the Third International has already scored a decisive victory; it has defeated the yellow, social-chauvinist Second International, which only a few months ago was incomparably stronger than the Third International, seemed stable and powerful, and enjoyed every possible support—direct and indirect, material (Cabinet posts, passports, the press) and ideological—from the world bourgeoisie.

It is now essential that Communists of every country should quite consciously take into account both the fundamental ob

jectives of the struggle against opportunism and "Left" doctrinairism, and the *concrete features* which this struggle assumes and must inevitably assume in each country, in conformity with the specific character of its economics, politics, culture, and national composition (Ireland, etc.), its colonies, religious divisions, and so on and so forth. Dissatisfaction with the Second International is felt everywhere and is spreading and growing, both because of its opportunism and because of its inability or incapacity to create a really centralised and really leading centre capable of directing the international tactics of the revolutionary proletariat in its struggle for a world Soviet republic. It should be clearly realised that such a leading centre can never be built up on stereotyped, mechanically equated, and identical tactical rules of struggle. As long as national and state distinctions exist among peoples and countries—and these will continue to exist for a very long time to come, even after the dictatorship of the proletariat has been established on a world-wide scale—the unity of the international tactics of the communist working-class movement in all countries demands, not the elimination of variety or the suppression of national distinctions (which is a pipe dream at present), but the application of the *fundamental* principles of communism (Soviet power and the dictatorship of the proletariat), which will *correctly modify* these principles in certain *particulars*, correctly adapt and apply them to national and national-state distinctions. To seek out, investigate, predict, and grasp that which is nationally specific and nationally distinctive, in the *concrete manner* in which each country should tackle a *single* international task: victory over opportunism and Left doctrinairism within the working-class movement; the overthrow of the bourgeoisie; the establishment of a Soviet republic and a proletarian dictatorship—such is the basic task in the historical period that all the advanced countries (and not they alone) are going through. The chief thing—though, of course, far from everything—the chief thing, has already been achieved: the vanguard of the working class has been won over, has ranged itself on the side of Soviet government and against parliamentarianism, on the side of the dictatorship of the proletariat and against bourgeois democracy. All efforts and all attention should now be concentrated on the *next* step, which may seem—and from a certain viewpoint actually is—less fundamental, but on the other hand, is actually closer to a practical accomplishment of the task. That step is: the search after forms of the *transition* or the *approach* to the proletarian revolution.

The proletarian vanguard has been won over ideologically. That is the main thing. Without this, not even the first step

towards victory can be made. But that is still quite a long way from victory. Victory cannot be won with a vanguard alone. To throw only the vanguard into the decisive battle, before the entire class, the broad masses, have taken up a position either of direct support for the vanguard, or at least of sympathetic neutrality towards it and of precluded support for the enemy, would be, not merely foolish but criminal. Propaganda and agitation alone are not enough for an entire class, the broad masses of the working people, those oppressed by capital, to take up such a stand. For that, the masses must have their own political experience. Such is the fundamental law of all great revolutions, which has been confirmed with compelling force and vividness, not only in Russia but in Germany as well. To turn resolutely towards communism, it was necessary, not only for the ignorant and often illiterate masses of Russia, but also for the literate and well-educated masses of Germany, to realise from their own bitter experience the absolute impotence and spinelessness, the absolute helplessness and servility to the bourgeoisie, and the utter vileness of the government of the paladins of the Second International; they had to realise that a dictatorship of the extreme reactionaries (Kornilov in Russia,<sup>160</sup> Kapp<sup>161</sup> and Co. in Germany) is inevitably the only alternative to a dictatorship of the proletariat.

The immediate objective of the class-conscious vanguard of the international working-class movement, i.e., the Communist parties, groups and trends, is to be able to *lead* the broad masses (who are still, for the most part, apathetic, inert, dormant and convention-ridden) to their new position, or, rather, to be able to lead, *not only* their own party but also these masses in their advance and transition to the new position. While the first historical objective (that of winning over the class-conscious vanguard of the proletariat to the side of Soviet power and the dictatorship of the working class) could not have been reached without a complete ideological and political victory over opportunism and social-chauvinism, the second and immediate objective, which consists in being able to lead the *masses* to a new position ensuring the victory of the vanguard in the revolution, cannot be reached without the liquidation of Left doctrinairism, and without a full elimination of its errors.

As long as it was (and inasmuch as it still is) a question of winning the proletariat's vanguard over to the side of communism, priority went and still goes to propaganda work; even propaganda circles, with all their parochial limitations, are useful under these conditions, and produce good results. But when it is a question of practical action by the masses, of the disposition, if one may so put it, of vast armies, of the alignment of *all* the

class forces in a given society *for the final and decisive battle*, then propagandist methods alone, the mere repetition of the truths of "pure" communism, are of no avail. In these circumstances, one must not count in thousands, like the propagandist belonging to a small group that has not yet given leadership to the masses; in these circumstances one must count in millions and tens of millions. In these circumstances, we must ask ourselves, not only whether we have convinced the vanguard of the revolutionary class, but also whether the historically effective forces of *all* classes—positively of all the classes in a given society, without exception—are arrayed in such a way that the decisive battle is at hand—in such a way that: (1) all the class forces hostile to us have become sufficiently entangled, are sufficiently at loggerheads with each other, have sufficiently weakened themselves in a struggle which is beyond their strength; (2) all the vacillating and unstable, intermediate elements—the petty bourgeoisie and the petty-bourgeois democrats, as distinct from the bourgeoisie—have sufficiently exposed themselves in the eyes of the people, have sufficiently disgraced themselves through their practical bankruptcy, and (3) among the proletariat, a mass sentiment favouring the most determined, bold and dedicated revolutionary action against the bourgeoisie has emerged and begun to grow vigorously. Then revolution is indeed ripe; then, indeed, if we have correctly gauged all the conditions indicated and summarised above, and if we have chosen the right moment, our victory is assured.

The differences between the Churchills and the Lloyd Georges—with insignificant national distinctions, these political types exist in *all* countries—on the one hand, and between the Hendersons and the Lloyd Georges on the other, are quite minor and unimportant from the standpoint of pure (i.e., abstract) communism, i.e., communism that has not yet matured to the stage of practical political action by the masses. However, from the standpoint of this practical action by the masses, these differences are most important. To take due account of these differences, and to determine the moment when the inevitable conflicts between these "friends", which weaken and enfeeble *all the "friends" taken together*, will have come to a head—that is the concern, the task, of a Communist who wants to be not merely a class-conscious and convinced propagandist of ideas, but a practical leader of the *masses* in the revolution. It is necessary to link the strictest devotion to the ideas of communism with the ability to effect all the necessary practical compromises, tacks, conciliatory manoeuvres, zigzags, retreats and so on, in order to speed up the achievement and then loss of political power by the Hendersons (the heroes of the Second International, if we are not to

name individual representatives of petty-bourgeois democracy who call themselves socialists); to accelerate their inevitable bankruptcy in practice, which will enlighten the masses in the spirit of our ideas, in the direction of communism; to accelerate the inevitable friction, quarrels, conflicts and complete disintegration among the Hendersons, the Lloyd Georges and the Churchills (the Mensheviks, the Socialist-Revolutionaries, the Constitutional-Democrats, the monarchists; the Scheidemanns, the bourgeoisie and the Kappists, etc.); to select the proper moment when the discord among these "pillars of sacrosanct private property" is at its height, so that, through a decisive offensive, the proletariat will defeat them all and capture political power.

History as a whole, and the history of revolutions in particular, is always richer in content, more varied, more multiform, more lively and ingenious than is imagined by even the best parties, the most class-conscious vanguards of the most advanced classes. This can readily be understood, because even the finest of vanguards express the class-consciousness, will, passion and imagination of tens of thousands, whereas at moments of great upsurge and the exertion of all human capacities, revolutions are made by the class-consciousness, will, passion and imagination of tens of millions, spurred on by a most acute struggle of classes. Two very important practical conclusions follow from this: first, that in order to accomplish its task the revolutionary class must be able to master *all* forms or aspects of social activity without exception (completing after the capture of political power—sometimes at great risk and with very great danger—what it did not complete before the capture of power); second, that the revolutionary class must be prepared for the most rapid and brusque replacement of one form by another.

One will readily agree that any army which does not train to use all the weapons, all the means and methods of warfare that the enemy possesses, or may possess, is behaving in an unwise or even criminal manner. This applies to politics even more than it does to the art of war. In politics it is even harder to know in advance which methods of struggle will be applicable and to our advantage in certain future conditions. Unless we learn to apply all the methods of struggle, we may suffer grave and sometimes even decisive defeat, if changes beyond our control in the position of the other classes bring to the forefront a form of activity in which we are especially weak. If, however, we learn to use all the methods of struggle, victory will be certain, because we represent the interests of the really foremost and really revolutionary class, even if circumstances do not permit us to make use of weapons that are most dangerous to the enemy, weapons that deal the swiftest mortal blows. Inexperienced revolution-

aries often think that legal methods of struggle are opportunist because, in this field, the bourgeoisie has most frequently deceived and duped the workers (particularly in "peaceful" and non-revolutionary times), while illegal methods of struggle are revolutionary. That, however, is wrong. The truth is that those parties and leaders are opportunists and traitors to the working class that are unable or unwilling (do not say, "I can't"; say, "I shan't") to use illegal methods of struggle in conditions such as those which prevailed, for example, during the imperialist war of 1914-18, when the bourgeoisie of the freest democratic countries most brazenly and brutally deceived the workers, and smothered the truth about the predatory character of the war. But revolutionaries who are incapable of combining illegal forms of struggle with *every* form of legal struggle are poor revolutionaries indeed. It is not difficult to be a revolutionary when revolution has already broken out and is in spate, when all people are joining the revolution just because they are carried away, because it is the vogue, and sometimes even from careerist motives. After its victory, the proletariat has to make most strenuous efforts, even the most painful, so as to "liberate" itself from such pseudo-revolutionaries. It is far more difficult—and far more precious—to be a revolutionary when the conditions for direct, open, really mass and really revolutionary struggle *do not yet exist*, to be able to champion the interests of the revolution (by propaganda, agitation and organisation) in non-revolutionary bodies, and quite often in downright reactionary bodies, in a non-revolutionary situation, among the masses who are incapable of immediately appreciating the need for revolutionary methods of action. To be able to seek, find and correctly determine the specific path or the particular turn of events that will *lead* the masses to the real, decisive and final revolutionary struggle—such is the main objective of communism in Western Europe and in America today.

Britain is an example. We cannot tell—no one can tell in advance—how soon a real proletarian revolution will flare up there, and *what immediate cause* will most serve to rouse, kindle, and impel into the struggle the very wide masses, who are still dormant. Hence, it is our duty to carry on all our preparatory work in such a way as to be "well shod on all four feet" (as the late Plekhanov, when he was a Marxist and revolutionary, was fond of saying). It is possible that the breach will be forced, the ice broken, by a parliamentary crisis, or by a crisis arising from colonial and imperialist contradictions, which are hopelessly entangled and are becoming increasingly painful and acute, or perhaps by some third cause, etc. We are not discussing the kind of struggle that will *determine* the fate of the proletarian revo-

lution in Great Britain (no Communist has any doubt on that score; for all of us this is a foregone conclusion): what we are discussing is the *immediate cause* that will bring into motion the now dormant proletarian masses, and lead them right up to revolution. Let us not forget that in the French bourgeois republic, for example, in a situation which, from both the international and the national viewpoints, was a hundred times less revolutionary than it is today, such an "unexpected" and "petty" cause as one of the many thousands of fraudulent machinations of the reactionary military caste (the Dreyfus case<sup>162</sup>) was enough to bring the people to the brink of civil war!

In Great Britain the Communists should constantly, unremittingly and unswervingly utilise parliamentary elections and all the vicissitudes of the Irish, colonial and world-imperialist policy of the British Government, and all other fields, spheres and aspects of public life, and work in all of them in a new way, in a communist way, in the spirit of the Third, not the Second, International. I have neither the time nor the space here to describe the "Russian" "Bolshevik" methods of participation in parliamentary elections and in the parliamentary struggle; I can, however, assure foreign Communists that they were quite unlike the usual West-European parliamentary campaigns. From this the conclusion is often drawn: "Well, that was in Russia; in our country parliamentarianism is different." This is a false conclusion. Communists, adherents of the Third International in all countries, exist for the purpose of *changing*—all along the line, in all spheres of life—the old socialist, trade unionist, syndicalist, and parliamentary type of work into a *new* type of work, the communist. In Russia, too, there was always an abundance of opportunism, purely bourgeois sharp practices and capitalist rigging in the elections. In Western Europe and in America, the Communists must learn to create a new, unc customary, non-opportunist, and non-careerist parliamentarianism; the Communist parties must issue their slogans; true proletarians, with the help of the unorganised and downtrodden poor, should distribute leaflets, canvass workers' houses and cottages of the rural proletarians and peasants in the remote villages (fortunately there are many times fewer remote villages in Europe than in Russia, and in Britain the number is very small); they should go into the public houses, penetrate into unions, societies and chance gatherings of the common people, and speak to the people, not in learned (or very parliamentary) language; they should not at all strive to "get seats" in parliament, but should everywhere try to get people to think, and draw the masses into the struggle, to take the bourgeoisie at its word and utilise the machinery it has set up, the elections it has appointed, and the appeals it has made to the

people; they should try to explain to the people what Bolshevism is, in a way that was never possible (under bourgeois rule) outside of election times (exclusive, of course, of times of big strikes, when in Russia a *similar* apparatus for widespread popular agitation worked even more intensively). It is very difficult to do this in Western Europe and extremely difficult in America, but it can and must be done, for the objectives of communism cannot be achieved without effort. We must work to accomplish *practical* tasks, ever more varied and ever more closely connected with all branches of social life, *winning* branch after branch, and sphere after sphere *from the bourgeoisie*.

In Great Britain, further, the work of propaganda, agitation and organisation among the armed forces and among the oppressed and underprivileged nationalities in their "*own*" state (Ireland, the colonies) must also be tackled in a new fashion (one that is not socialist, but communist; not reformist, but revolutionary). That is because, in the era of imperialism in general and especially today after a war that was a sore trial to the peoples and has quickly opened their eyes to the truth (i.e., the fact that tens of millions were killed and maimed for the sole purpose of deciding whether the British or the German robbers should plunder the largest number of countries), all these spheres of social life are heavily charged with inflammable material and are creating numerous causes of conflicts, crises and an intensification of the class struggle. We do not and cannot know which spark—of the innumerable sparks that are flying about in all countries as a result of the world economic and political crisis—will kindle the conflagration, in the sense of raising up the masses; we must, therefore, with our new and communist principles, set to work to stir up all and sundry, even the oldest, mustiest and seemingly hopeless spheres, for otherwise we shall not be able to cope with our tasks, shall not be comprehensively prepared, shall not be in possession of all the weapons and shall not prepare ourselves either to gain victory over the bourgeoisie (which arranged all aspects of social life—and has now disarranged them—in its bourgeois fashion), or to bring about the impending communist reorganisation of every sphere of life, following that victory.

Since the proletarian revolution in Russia and its victories on an international scale, expected neither by the bourgeoisie nor the philistines, the entire world has become different, and the bourgeoisie everywhere has become different too. It is terrified of "Bolshevism", exasperated by it almost to the point of frenzy, and for that very reason it is, on the one hand, precipitating the progress of events and, on the other, concentrating on the forcible suppression of Bolshevism, thereby weakening its own position



in a number of other fields. In their tactics the Communists in all the advanced countries must take both these circumstances into account.

When the Russian Cadets and Kerensky began furiously to hound the Bolsheviks—especially since April 1917, and more particularly in June and July 1917—they overdid things. Millions of copies of bourgeois papers, clamouring in every key against the Bolsheviks, helped the masses to make an appraisal of Bolshevism: apart from the newspapers, all public life was full of discussions about Bolshevism, as a result of the bourgeoisie's "zeal". Today the millionaires of all countries are behaving on an international scale in a way that deserves our heartiest thanks. They are hounding Bolshevism with the same zeal as Kerensky and Co. did; they, too, are overdoing things and *helping* us just as Kerensky did. When the French bourgeoisie makes Bolshevism the central issue in the elections, and accuses the comparatively moderate or vacillating socialists of being Bolsheviks; when the American bourgeoisie, which has completely lost its head, seizes thousands and thousands of people on suspicion of Bolshevism, creates an atmosphere of panic, and broadcasts stories of Bolshevik plots; when, despite all its wisdom and experience, the British bourgeoisie—the most "solid" in the world—makes incredible blunders, founds richly endowed "anti-Bolshevik societies", creates a special literature on Bolshevism, and recruits an extra number of scientists, agitators and clergymen to combat it, we must salute and thank the capitalists. They are working for us. They are helping us to get the masses interested in the essence and significance of Bolshevism, and they cannot do otherwise, for they have *already* failed to ignore Bolshevism and stifle it.

But at the same time, the bourgeoisie sees practically only one aspect of Bolshevism—insurrection, violence, and terror; it therefore strives to prepare itself for resistance and opposition primarily in *this* field. It is possible that, in certain instances, in certain countries, and for certain brief periods, it will succeed in this. We must reckon with such an eventuality, and we have absolutely nothing to fear if it does succeed. Communism is emerging in positively every sphere of public life; its beginnings are to be seen literally on all sides. The "contagion" (to use the favourite metaphor of the bourgeoisie and the bourgeois police, the one mostly to their liking) has very thoroughly penetrated the organism and has completely permeated it. If special efforts are made to block one of the channels, the "contagion" will find another one, sometimes very unexpectedly. Life will assert itself. Let the bourgeoisie rave, work itself into a frenzy, go to extremes, commit follies, take vengeance on the Bolsheviks in advance, and endeavour to kill off (as in India, Hungary, Germany, etc.) more

hundreds, thousands, and hundreds of thousands of yesterday's and tomorrow's Bolsheviks. In acting thus, the bourgeoisie is acting as all historically doomed classes have done. Communists should know that, in any case, the future belongs to them; therefore, we can (and must) combine the most intense passion in the great revolutionary struggle, with the coolest and most sober appraisal of the frenzied ravings of the bourgeoisie. The Russian revolution was cruelly defeated in 1905; the Russian Bolsheviks were defeated in July 1917; over 15,000 German Communists were killed as a result of the wily provocation and cunning manoeuvres of Scheidemann and Noske, who were working hand in glove with the bourgeoisie and the monarchist generals; White terror is raging in Finland and Hungary. But in all cases and in all countries, communism is becoming steeled and is growing; its roots are so deep that persecution does not weaken or debilitate it, but only strengthens it. Only one thing is lacking to enable us to march forward more confidently and firmly to victory, namely, the universal and thorough awareness of all Communists in all countries of the necessity to display the utmost *flexibility* in their tactics. The communist movement, which is developing magnificently, now lacks, especially in the advanced countries, this awareness and the ability to apply it in practice.

That which happened to such leaders of the Second International, such highly erudite Marxists devoted to socialism as Kautsky, Otto Bauer and others, could (and should) provide a useful lesson. They fully appreciated the need for flexible tactics; they themselves learned Marxist dialectic and taught it to others (and much of what they have done in this field will always remain a valuable contribution to socialist literature); however, *in the application* of this dialectic they committed such an error, or proved to be so *undialectical* in practice, so incapable of taking into account the rapid change of forms and the rapid acquisition of new content by the old forms, that their fate is not much more enviable than that of Hynlman, Guesde and Plekhanov. The principal reason for their bankruptcy was that they were hypnotised by a definite form of growth of the working-class movement and socialism, forgot all about the one-sidedness of that form, were afraid to see the break-up which objective conditions made inevitable, and continued to repeat simple and, at first glance, incontestable axioms that had been learned by rote, like: "three is more than two". But politics is more like algebra than arithmetic, and still more like higher than elementary mathematics. In reality, all the old forms of the socialist movement have acquired a new content, and, consequently, a new symbol, the "minus" sign, has appeared in front of all the figures; our wiseacres, however, have stubbornly continued (and still

continue) to persuade themselves and others that "minus three" is more than "minus two".

We must see to it that Communists do not make a similar mistake, only in the opposite sense, or rather, we must see to it that a *similar mistake*, only made in the opposite sense by the "Left" Communists, is corrected as soon as possible and eliminated as rapidly and painlessly as possible. It is not only Right doctrinairism that is erroneous; Left doctrinairism is erroneous too. Of course, the mistake of Left doctrinairism in communism is at present a thousand times less dangerous and less significant than that of Right doctrinairism (i. e., social-chauvinism and Kautskyism); but, after all, that is only due to the fact that Left communism is a very young trend, is only just coming into being. It is only for this reason that, under certain conditions, the disease can be easily eradicated, and we must set to work with the utmost energy to eradicate it.

The old forms burst asunder, for it turned out that their new content—anti-proletarian and reactionary—had attained an inordinate development. From the standpoint of the development of international communism, our work today has such a durable and powerful content (for Soviet power and the dictatorship of the proletariat) that it can *and must* manifest itself in any form, both new and old; it can and must regenerate, conquer and subjugate all forms, not only the new, but also the old—not for the purpose of reconciling itself with the old, but for the purpose of making all and every form—new and old—a weapon for the complete and irrevocable victory of communism.

The Communists must exert every effort to direct the working-class movement and social development in general along the straightest and shortest road to the victory of Soviet power and the dictatorship of the proletariat on a world-wide scale. That is an incontestable truth. But it is enough to take one little step farther—a step that might seem to be in the same direction—and truth turns into error. We have only to say, as the German and British Left Communists do, that we recognise only one road, only the direct road, and that we will not permit tacking, conciliatory manoeuvres, or compromising—and it will be a mistake which may cause, and in part has already caused and is causing, very grave prejudice to communism. Right doctrinairism persisted in recognising only the old forms, and became utterly bankrupt, for it did not notice the new content. Left doctrinairism persists in the unconditional repudiation of certain old forms, failing to see that the new content is forcing its way through all and sundry forms, that it is our duty as Communists to master all forms, to learn how, with the maximum rapidity, to supplement one form with another, to substitute one for another, and

to adapt our tactics to any such change that does not come from our class or from our efforts.

World revolution has been so powerfully stimulated and accelerated by the horrors, vileness and abominations of the world imperialist war and by the hopelessness of the situation created by it, this revolution is developing in scope and depth with such splendid rapidity, with such a wonderful variety of changing forms, with such an instructive practical refutation of all doctrinaireism, that there is every reason to hope for a rapid and complete recovery of the international communist movement from the infantile disorder of "Left-wing" communism.

**April 27, 1920**

## APPENDIX

Before publishing houses in our country—which has been plundered by the imperialists of the whole world in revenge for the proletarian revolution, and which is still being plundered and blockaded by them regardless of all promises they made to their workers—were able to bring out my pamphlet, additional material arrived from abroad. Without claiming to present in my pamphlet anything more than the cursory notes of a publicist, I shall dwell briefly upon a few points.

## I

## THE SPLIT AMONG THE GERMAN COMMUNISTS

The split among the Communists in Germany is an accomplished fact. The "Lefts", or the "opposition on principle", have formed a separate Communist Workers' Party, as distinct from the Communist Party. A split also seems imminent in Italy—I say "seems", as I have only two additional issues (Nos. 7 and 8) of the Left newspaper, *Il Soviet*, in which the possibility of and necessity for a split is openly discussed, and mention is also made of a congress of the "Abstentionist" group (or the boycottists, i.e., opponents of participation in parliament), which group is still part of the Italian Socialist Party.

There is reason to fear that the split with the "Lefts", the anti-parliamentarians (in part anti-politicals too, who are opposed to any political party and to work in the trade unions), will become an international phenomenon, like the split with the "Centrists" (i.e., Kautskyites, Longuetists, Independents, etc.). Let that be so. At all events, a split is better than confusion, which hampers the ideological, theoretic and revolutionary growth and maturing of the party, and its harmonious, really organised practical work which actually paves the way for the dictatorship of the proletariat.

Let the "Lefts" put themselves to a practical test on a national and international scale. Let them try to prepare for (and then implement) the dictatorship of the proletariat, without a rigorously centralised party with iron discipline, without the ability to become masters of every sphere, every branch, and every variety of political and cultural work. Practical experience will soon teach them.

Only, every effort should be made to prevent the split with the "Lefts" from impeding—or to see that it impedes as little as possible—the necessary amalgamation into a single party, inevitable in the near future, of all participants in the working-class movement who sincerely and conscientiously stand for

Soviet government and the dictatorship of the proletariat. It was the exceptional good fortune of the Bolsheviks in Russia to have had fifteen years for a systematic and consummated struggle both against the Mensheviks (i.e., the opportunists and "Centrists") and against the "Lefts", long before the masses began direct action for the dictatorship of the proletariat. In Europe and America the same work has now to be done by forced marches, so to say. Certain individuals, especially among unsuccessful aspirants to leadership, may (if they lack proletarian discipline and are not honest towards themselves) persist in their mistakes for a long time; however, when the time is ripe, the masses of the workers will themselves unite easily and rapidly and unite all sincere Communists to form a single party capable of establishing the Soviet system and the dictatorship of the proletariat.\*

## II

### THE COMMUNISTS AND THE INDEPENDENTS IN GERMANY

In this pamphlet I have expressed the opinion that a compromise between the Communists and the Left wing of the Independents is necessary and useful to communism, but will not be easy to bring about. Newspapers which I have subsequently received have confirmed this opinion on both points. No. 32 of *The Red Flag*, organ of the Central Committee, the Communist Party of Germany (*Die Rote Fahne*,<sup>163</sup> Zentralorgan der Kommunistischen

\* With regard to the question of future amalgamation of the "Left" Communists, the anti-parliamentarians, with the Communists in general, I would make the following additional remarks. In the measure in which I have been able to familiarise myself with the newspapers of the "Left" Communists and the Communists in general in Germany, I find that the former have the advantage of being better able than the latter to carry on agitation among the masses. I have repeatedly observed something similar to this in the history of the Bolshevik Party, though on a smaller scale, in individual local organisations, and not on a national scale. For instance, in 1907-08 the "Left" Bolsheviks, on certain occasions and in certain places, carried on more successful agitation among the masses than we did. This may partly have been due to the fact that at a revolutionary moment, or at a time when revolutionary recollections are still fresh, it is easier to approach the masses with tactics of sheer negation. This, however, is not an argument to prove the correctness of such tactics. At all events, there is not the least doubt that a Communist party that wishes to be the real vanguard, the advanced detachment, of the revolutionary class, of the proletariat—and which, in addition, wishes to learn to lead the masses, not only the proletarian, but also the non-proletarian masses of working and exploited people—must know how to conduct propaganda, how to organise, and how to carry on agitation in a manner most simple and comprehensible, most clear and vivid, both to the urban, factory masses and to the rural masses.

Partei Deutschlands, Spartakusbund,\* of March 26, 1920) published a "statement" by this Central Committee regarding the Kapp-Lüttwitz military *putsch* and on the "socialist government". This statement is quite correct both in its basic premise and its practical conclusions. The basic premise is that at present there is no "objective basis" for the dictatorship of the proletariat because the "majority of the urban workers" support the Independents. The conclusion is: a promise to be a "loyal opposition" (i.e., renunciation of preparations for a "forcible overthrow") to a "socialist government if it excludes bourgeois-capitalist parties".

In the main, this tactic is undoubtedly correct. Yet, even if minor inaccuracies of formulation should not be dwelt on, it is impossible to pass over in silence the fact that a government consisting of social-traitors should not (in an official statement by the Communist Party) be called "socialist"; that one should not speak of the exclusion of "bourgeois-capitalist parties", when the parties both of the Scheidemanns and of the Kautskys and Crispiens are petty-bourgeois-democratic parties; that things should never be written that are contained in § 4 of the statement, which reads:

"... A state of affairs in which political freedom can be enjoyed without restriction, and bourgeois democracy cannot operate as the dictatorship of capital is, from the viewpoint of the development of the proletarian dictatorship, of the utmost importance in further winning the proletarian masses over to the side of communism. ..."

Such a state of affairs is impossible. Petty-bourgeois leaders, the German Hendersons (Scheidemanns) and Snowdens (Crispiens), do not and cannot go beyond the bounds of bourgeois democracy, which, in its turn, cannot but be a dictatorship of capital. To achieve the practical results that the Central Committee of the Communist Party had been quite rightly working for, there was no need to write such things, which are wrong in principle and politically harmful. It would have been sufficient to say (if one wished to observe parliamentary amenities): "As long as the majority of the urban workers follow the Independents, we Communists must do nothing to prevent those workers from getting rid of their last philistine-democratic (i.e., 'bourgeois-capitalist') illusions by going through the experience of having a government of their 'own'." That is sufficient ground for a compromise, which is really necessary and should consist in renouncing, for a certain period, all attempts at the forcible overthrow of a government which enjoys the confidence of a majority of the urban workers. But in everyday mass agitation, in which one is not bound by official parliamentary amenities, one might, of course, add: "Let scoundrels like the Scheidemanns, and philistines like

\* The Spartacus League.—Ed.



the Kautskys and Crispiens reveal by their deeds how they have been fooled themselves and how they are fooling the workers; their 'clean' government will itself do the 'cleanest' job of all in 'cleansing' the Augean stables of socialism, Social-Democracy and other forms of social treachery."

The real nature of the present leaders of the Independent Social-Democratic Party of Germany (leaders of whom it has been wrongly said that they have already lost all influence, whereas in reality they are even more dangerous to the proletariat than the Hungarian Social-Democrats who styled themselves Communists and promised to "support" the dictatorship of the proletariat) was once again revealed during the German equivalent of the Kornilov revolt, i.e., the Kapp-Lüttwitz *putsch*.<sup>\*</sup> A small but striking illustration is provided by two brief articles—one by Karl Kautsky entitled "Decisive Hours" ("Entscheidende Stunden") in *Freiheit* (*Freedom*),<sup>164</sup> organ of the Independents, of March 30, 1920, and the other by Arthur Crispien entitled "On the Political Situation" (in the same newspaper, issue of April 14, 1920). These gentlemen are absolutely incapable of thinking and reasoning like revolutionaries. They are snivelling philistine democrats, who become a thousand times more dangerous to the proletariat when they claim to be supporters of Soviet government and of the dictatorship of the proletariat because, in fact, whenever a difficult and dangerous situation arises they are sure to commit treachery . . . while "sincerely" believing that they are helping the proletariat! Did not the Hungarian Social-Democrats, after rechristening themselves Communists, also want to "help" the proletariat when, because of their cowardice and spinelessness, they considered the position of Soviet power in Hungary hopeless and went snivelling to the agents of the Entente capitalists and the Entente hangmen?

### III

#### TURATI AND CO. IN ITALY

The issues of the Italian newspaper *Il Soviet* referred to above fully confirm what I have said in the pamphlet about the Italian Socialist Party's error in tolerating such members and even such a group of parliamentarians in their ranks. It is still further confirmed by an outside observer like the Rome correspondent of *The*

<sup>\*</sup> Incidentally, this has been dealt with in an exceptionally clear, concise, precise and Marxist way in the excellent organ of the Austrian Communist Party, *The Red Banner*, of March 28 and 30, 1920. (*Die Rote Fahne*,<sup>165</sup> Wien, 1920, Nos. 266 and 267; L.L.: "Ein neuer Abschnitt der deutschen Revolution" ["A New Stage of the German Revolution"—Ed.]).

*Manchester Guardian*, organ of the British liberal bourgeoisie, whose interview with Turati is published in its issue of March 12, 1920. The correspondent writes:

"... Signor Turati's opinion is that the revolutionary peril is not such as to cause undue anxiety in Italy. The Maximalists are fanning the fire of Soviet theories only to keep the masses awake and excited. These theories are, however, merely legendary notions, unripe programmes, incapable of being put to practical use. They are likely only to maintain the working classes in a state of expectation. The very men who use them as a lure to dazzle proletarian eyes find themselves compelled to fight a daily battle for the extortion of some often trifling economic advantages so as to delay the moment when the working classes will lose their illusions and faith in the cherished myths. Hence a long string of strikes of all sizes and with all pretexts up to the very latest ones in the mail and railway services—strikes which make the already hard conditions of the country still worse. The country is irritated owing to the difficulties connected with its Adriatic problem, is weighed down by its foreign debt and by its inflated paper circulation, and yet it is still far from realising the necessity of adopting that discipline of work which alone can restore order and prosperity...."

It is clear as daylight that this British correspondent has blurted out the truth, which is probably being concealed and glossed over both by Turati himself, and his bourgeois defenders, accomplices and inspirers in Italy. That truth is that the ideas and political activities of Turati, Trèves, Modigliani, Dugoni and Co. are really and precisely of the kind that the British correspondent has described. It is downright social treachery. Just look at this advocacy of order and discipline among the workers, who are wage-slaves toiling to enrich the capitalists! And how familiar to us Russians are all these Menshevik speeches! What a valuable admission it is that the masses are *in favour of* Soviet government! How stupid and vulgarly bourgeois is the failure to understand the revolutionary role of strikes which are spreading spontaneously! Indeed, the correspondent of the British bourgeois-liberal newspaper has rendered Turati and Co. a disservice and has excellently confirmed the correctness of the demand by Comrade Bordiga and his friends on *Il Soviet*, who are insisting that the Italian Socialist Party, if it really wants to be *for* the Third International, should drum Turati and Co. out of its ranks and become a Communist Party both in name and in deed.

#### IV

### FALSE CONCLUSIONS FROM CORRECT PREMISES

However, Comrade Bordiga and his "Left" friends draw from their correct criticism of Turati and Co. the wrong conclusion that any participation in parliament is harmful in principle. The

Italian "Lefts" cannot advance even a shadow of serious argument in support of this view. They simply do not know (or try to forget) the international examples of really revolutionary and communist utilisation of bourgeois parliaments, which has been of unquestionable value in preparing for the proletarian revolution. They simply cannot conceive of any "new" ways of that utilisation, and keep on repeatedly and endlessly vociferating about the "old" non-Bolshevik way.

Herein lies their fundamental error. In *all* fields of activity, and not in the parliamentary sphere alone, communism *must introduce* (and without long and persistent effort it will be *unable* to introduce) something new in principle that will represent a radical break with the traditions of the Second International (while retaining and developing what was good in the latter).

Let us take, say, journalistic work. Newspapers, pamphlets and leaflets perform the indispensable work of propaganda, agitation and organisation. No mass movement in any country at all civilised can get along without a journalistic apparatus. No outcries against "leaders" or solemn vows to keep the masses uncontaminated by the influence of leaders will relieve us of the necessity of using, for this work, people from a bourgeois-intellectual environment or will rid us of the bourgeois-democratic, "private property" atmosphere and environment in which this work is carried out under capitalism. Even two and a half years after the overthrow of the bourgeoisie, after the conquest of political power by the proletariat, we still have this atmosphere around us, this environment of mass (peasant, artisan) bourgeois-democratic private property relations.

Parliamentarianism is one form of activity; journalism is another. The content of both can and should be communist if those engaged in these two spheres are genuine Communists, really members of a proletarian mass party. Yet, in neither sphere—and *in no other sphere of activity* under capitalism and during the period of transition from capitalism to socialism—is it possible to avoid those difficulties which the proletariat must overcome, those special problems which the proletariat must solve so as to use, for its own purposes, the services of people from the ranks of the bourgeoisie, eradicate bourgeois-intellectualist prejudices and influences, and weaken the resistance of (and, ultimately, completely transform) the petty-bourgeois environment.

Did we not, before the war of 1914-18, witness in all countries innumerable cases of extreme "Left" anarchists, syndicalists and others fulminating against parliamentarianism, deriding bourgeois-vulgarised parliamentary socialists, castigating their careerism, and so on and so forth, and yet themselves pursuing the *same kind* of bourgeois career *through* journalism and *through*

work in the syndicates (trade unions)? Is not the example of Jouhaux and Merrheim, to limit oneself to France, typical in this respect?

The childishness of those who "repudiate" participation in parliament consists in their thinking it possible to "*solve*" the difficult problem of combating bourgeois-democratic influences *within* the working-class movement in such a "simple", "easy", allegedly revolutionary manner, whereas they are actually merely running away from their own shadows, only closing their eyes to difficulties and trying to shrug them off with mere words. The most shameless careerism, the bourgeois utilisation of parliamentary seats, glaringly reformist perversion of parliamentary activity, and vulgar petty-bourgeois conservatism are all unquestionably common and prevalent features engendered everywhere by capitalism, not only outside but also within the working-class movement. But the selfsame capitalism and the bourgeois environment it creates (which disappears very slowly even after the overthrow of the bourgeoisie, since the peasantry constantly regenerates the bourgeoisie) give rise to what is essentially the same bourgeois careerism, national chauvinism, petty-bourgeois vulgarity, etc.—merely varying insignificantly in form—in positively every sphere of activity and life.

You think, my dear boycottists and anti-parliamentarians, that you are "terribly revolutionary", but in reality *you are frightened* by the comparatively minor difficulties of the struggle against bourgeois influences within the working-class movement, whereas your victory—i.e., the overthrow of the bourgeoisie and the conquest of political power by the proletariat—will create *these very same* difficulties on a still larger, an infinitely larger scale. Like children, you are frightened by a minor difficulty which confronts you today, but you do not understand that tomorrow, and the day after, you will still have to learn, and learn thoroughly, to overcome the selfsame difficulties, only on an immeasurably greater scale.

Under Soviet rule, your proletarian party and ours will be invaded by a still larger number of bourgeois intellectuals. They will worm their way into the Soviets, the courts, and the administration, since communism cannot be built otherwise than with the aid of the human material created by capitalism, and the bourgeois intellectuals cannot be expelled and destroyed, but must be won over, remoulded, assimilated and re-educated, just as we must—in a protracted struggle waged on the basis of the dictatorship of the proletariat—re-educate the proletarians themselves, who do not abandon their petty-bourgeois prejudices at one stroke, by a miracle, at the behest of the Virgin Mary, at the behest of a slogan, resolution or decree, but only in the course

of a long and difficult mass struggle against mass petty-bourgeois influences. Under Soviet rule, these same problems, which the anti-parliamentarians now so proudly, so haughtily, so lightly and so childishly brush aside with a wave of the hand—*these selfsame* problems are arising anew *within* the Soviets, within the Soviet administration, among the Soviet “pleaders” (in Russia we have abolished, and have rightly abolished, the bourgeois legal bar, but it is reviving again under the cover of the “Soviet pleaders”<sup>166</sup>). Among Soviet engineers, Soviet school-teachers and the privileged, i.e., the most highly skilled and best situated, *workers* at Soviet factories, we observe a constant revival of absolutely *all* the negative traits peculiar to bourgeois parliamentarianism, and we are conquering this evil—gradually—only by a tireless, prolonged and persistent struggle based on proletarian organisation and discipline.

Of course, under the rule of the bourgeoisie it is very “difficult” to eradicate bourgeois habits from our own, i.e., the workers, party; it is “difficult” to expel from the party the familiar parliamentary leaders who have been hopelessly corrupted by bourgeois prejudices; it is “difficult” to subject to proletarian discipline the absolutely essential (even if very limited) number of people coming from the ranks of the bourgeoisie; it is “difficult” to form, in a bourgeois parliament, a communist group fully worthy of the working class; it is “difficult” to ensure that the communist parliamentarians do not engage in bourgeois parliamentary inanities, but concern themselves with the very urgent work of propaganda, agitation and organisation among the masses. All this is “difficult”, to be sure; it was difficult in Russia, and it is vastly more difficult in Western Europe and in America, where the bourgeoisie is far stronger, where bourgeois-democratic traditions are stronger, and so on.

Yet all these “difficulties” are mere child’s play compared with the *same sort* of problems which, in any event, the proletariat will have most certainly to solve in order to achieve victory, both during the proletarian revolution and after the seizure of power by the proletariat. Compared with *these* truly gigantic problems of re-educating, under the proletarian dictatorship, millions of peasants and small proprietors, hundreds of thousands of office employees, officials and bourgeois intellectuals, of subordinating them all to the proletarian state and to proletarian leadership, of eradicating their bourgeois habits and traditions—compared with these gigantic problems it is childishly easy to create, under the rule of the bourgeoisie, and in a bourgeois parliament, a really communist group of a real proletarian party.

If our “Left” and anti-parliamentarian comrades do not learn to overcome even such a small difficulty now, we may safely

assert that either they will prove incapable of achieving the dictatorship of the proletariat, and will be unable to subordinate and remould the bourgeois intellectuals and bourgeois institutions on a wide scale, or they will have to *hastily complete their education*, and, by that haste, will do a great deal of harm to the cause of the proletariat, will commit more errors than usual, will manifest more than average weakness and inefficiency, and so on and so forth.

Until the bourgeoisie has been overthrown and, after that until small-scale economy and small commodity production have entirely disappeared, the bourgeois atmosphere, proprietary habits and petty-bourgeois traditions will hamper proletarian work both outside and within the working-class movement, not only in a single field of activity—the parliamentary—but, inevitably, in every field of social activity, in all cultural and political spheres without exception. The attempt to brush aside, to fence oneself off from *one* of the “unpleasant” problems or difficulties in some one sphere of activity is a profound mistake, which will later most certainly have to be paid for. We must learn how to master every sphere of work and activity without exception, to overcome all difficulties and eradicate all bourgeois habits, customs and traditions everywhere. Any other way of presenting the question is just trifling, mere childishness.

May 12, 1920

## V

In the Russian edition of this book I somewhat incorrectly described the conduct of the Communist Party of Holland as a whole, in the sphere of international revolutionary policy. I therefore avail myself of the present opportunity to publish a letter from our Dutch comrades on this question and to correct the expression “Dutch Tribunists”, which I used in the Russian text, and for which I now substitute the words “certain members of the Communist Party of Holland”<sup>167</sup>.

*N. Lenin*

## LETTER FROM WIJNKOOP

Moscow, June 30, 1920

Dear Comrade Lenin,

Thanks to your kindness, we members of the Dutch delegation to the Second Congress of the Communist International were able to read your

*"Left-Wing" Communism—an Infantile Disorder* prior to its publication in the European languages. In several places in the book you emphasise your disapproval of the part played by some members of the Communist Party of Holland in international politics.

We feel, nevertheless, that we must protest against your laying the responsibility for their actions on the Communist Party. This is highly inaccurate. Moreover, it is unjust, because these members of the Communist Party of Holland take little or no part in the Party's current activities and are endeavouring, directly or indirectly, to give effect, in the Communist Party of Holland, to opposition slogans against which the Party and all its organs have waged, and continue to wage to this day, a most energetic struggle.

Fraternally yours,  
*D. J. Wijnkoop*  
(on behalf of the Dutch delegation)

Written April-May 1920

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## **SPEECH TO MEN OF THE RED ARMY LEAVING FOR THE POLISH FRONT MAY 5, 1920**

**NEWSPAPER REPORT**

Comrades: You know that, instigated by the Entente, the Polish landowners and capitalists have forced a new war on us. Remember, comrades, that we have no quarrel with the Polish peasants and workers; we have recognised Poland's independence and the Polish People's Republic, and shall continue to do so. We have proposed peace to Poland on the basis of the integrity of her frontiers, although these frontiers extend far beyond the purely Polish population. We have agreed to make all concessions, which is something each of you should remember at the front. Let your attitude to the Poles there prove that you are soldiers of a workers' and peasants' republic, that you are coming to them, not as aggressors but as liberators. Now that, despite our efforts, the Polish magnates have concluded an alliance with Petlyura, launched an offensive, are approaching Kiev, and are spreading rumours in the foreign press that they have already captured Kiev—which is the she: est fabrication since only yesterday I was talking on the direct line with F. Kon, who is in Kiev—we say: Comrades, we have been able to repel a more terrible enemy; we have been able to defeat our own landowners and capitalists, and we shall defeat the Polish landowners and capitalists too! All of us here today should pledge ourselves, give a solemn promise, that we shall stand as one man so as not to allow a victory of the Polish magnates and capitalists. Long live the peasants and workers of a free independent Polish Republic! Down with the Polish magnates, landowners and capitalists! Long live our Red Workers' and Peasants' Army! (*The mighty strains of the "Internationale" and cries of "Hurrah" drown Comrade Lenin's final words.*)



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# THESES FOR THE SECOND CONGRESS OF THE COMMUNIST INTERNATIONAL

## 1

### PRELIMINARY DRAFT THESES ON THE NATIONAL AND THE COLONIAL QUESTIONS

FOR THE SECOND CONGRESS  
OF THE COMMUNIST INTERNATIONAL

In submitting for discussion by the Second Congress of the Communist International the following draft theses on the national and the colonial questions I would request all comrades, especially those who possess concrete information on any of these very complex problems, to let me have their opinions, amendments, addenda and concrete remarks *in the most concise form (no more than two or three pages)*, particularly on the following points:

Austrian experience;  
Polish-Jewish and Ukrainian experience;  
Alsace-Lorraine and Belgium;  
Ireland;  
Danish-German, Italo-French and Italo-Slav relations;  
Balkan experience;  
Eastern peoples;  
The struggle against Pan-Islamism<sup>168</sup>;  
Relations in the Caucasus;  
The Bashkir and Tatar Republics;  
Kirghizia;  
Turkestan, its experience;  
Negroes in America;  
Colonies;  
China-Korea-Japan.

*N. Lenin*

June 5, 1920

1) An abstract or formal posing of the problem of equality in general and national equality in particular is in the very nature of bourgeois democracy. Under the guise of the equality of the individual in general, bourgeois democracy proclaims the formal

or legal equality of the property-owner and the proletarian, the exploiter and the exploited, thereby grossly deceiving the oppressed classes. On the plea that all men are absolutely equal, the bourgeoisie is transforming the idea of equality, which is itself a reflection of relations in commodity production, into a weapon in its struggle against the abolition of classes. The real meaning of the demand for equality consists in its being a demand for the abolition of classes.

2) In conformity with its fundamental task of combating bourgeois democracy and exposing its falseness and hypocrisy, the Communist Party, as the avowed champion of the proletarian struggle to overthrow the bourgeois yoke, must base its policy, in the national question too, not on abstract and formal principles but, first, on a precise appraisal of the specific historical situation and, primarily, of economic conditions; second, on a clear distinction between the interests of the oppressed classes, of working and exploited people, and the general concept of national interests as a whole, which implies the interests of the ruling class; third, on an equally clear distinction between the oppressed, dependent and subject nations and the oppressing, exploiting and sovereign nations, in order to counter the bourgeois-democratic lies that play down this colonial and financial enslavement of the vast majority of the world's population by an insignificant minority of the richest and advanced capitalist countries, a feature characteristic of the era of finance capital and imperialism.

3) The imperialist war of 1914-18 has very clearly revealed to all nations and to the oppressed classes of the whole world the falseness of bourgeois-democratic phrases, by practically demonstrating that the Treaty of Versailles of the celebrated "Western democracies" is an even more brutal and foul act of violence against weak nations than was the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk of the German Junkers and the Kaiser. The League of Nations and the entire postwar policy of the Entente reveal this truth with even greater clarity and distinctness. They are everywhere intensifying the revolutionary struggle both of the proletariat in the advanced countries and of the toiling masses in the colonial and dependent countries. They are hastening the collapse of the petty-bourgeois nationalist illusions that nations can live together in peace and equality under capitalism.

4) From these fundamental premises it follows that the Communist International's entire policy on the national and the colonial questions should rest primarily on a closer union of the proletarians and the working masses of all nations and countries for a joint revolutionary struggle to overthrow the landowners and the bourgeoisie. This union alone will guarantee victory over

capitalism, without which the abolition of national oppression and inequality is impossible.

5) The world political situation has now placed the dictatorship of the proletariat on the order of the day. World political developments are of necessity concentrated on a single focus—the struggle of the world bourgeoisie against the Soviet Russian Republic, around which are inevitably grouped, on the one hand, the Soviet movements of the advanced workers in all countries, and, on the other, all the national liberation movements in the colonies and among the oppressed nationalities, who are learning from bitter experience that their only salvation lies in the Soviet system's victory over world imperialism.

6) Consequently, one cannot at present confine oneself to a bare recognition or proclamation of the need for closer union between the working people of the various nations; a policy must be pursued that will achieve the closest alliance, with Soviet Russia, of all the national and colonial liberation movements. The form of this alliance should be determined by the degree of development of the communist movement in the proletariat of each country, or of the bourgeois-democratic liberation movement of the workers and peasants in backward countries or among backward nationalities.

7) Federation is a transitional form to the complete unity of the working people of different nations. The feasibility of federation has already been demonstrated in practice both by the relations between the R.S.F.S.R. and other Soviet Republics (the Hungarian, Finnish<sup>169</sup> and Latvian<sup>170</sup> in the past, and the Azerbaijan and Ukrainian at present), and by the relations within the R.S.F.S.R. in respect of nationalities which formerly enjoyed neither statehood nor autonomy (e.g., the Bashkir and Tatar autonomous republics in the R.S.F.S.R., founded in 1919 and 1920 respectively).

8) In this respect, it is the task of the Communist International to further develop and also to study and test by experience these new federations, which are arising on the basis of the Soviet system and the Soviet movement. In recognising that federation is a transitional form to complete unity, it is necessary to strive for ever closer federal unity, bearing in mind, first, that the Soviet republics, surrounded as they are by the imperialist powers of the whole world—which from the military standpoint are immeasurably stronger—cannot possibly continue to exist without the closest alliance; second, that a close economic alliance between the Soviet republics is necessary, otherwise the productive forces which have been ruined by imperialism cannot be restored and the well-being of the working people cannot be ensured; third, that there is a tendency towards the creation of a single world

economy, regulated by the proletariat of all nations as an integral whole and according to a common plan. This tendency has already revealed itself quite clearly under capitalism and is bound to be further developed and consummated under socialism.

9) The Communist International's national policy in the sphere of relations within the state cannot be restricted to the bare, formal, purely declaratory and actually non-committal recognition of the equality of nations to which the bourgeois democrats confine themselves—both those who frankly admit being such, and those who assume the name of socialists (such as the socialists of the Second International).

In all their propaganda and agitation—both within parliament and outside it—the Communist parties must consistently expose that constant violation of the equality of nations and of the guaranteed rights of national minorities which is to be seen in all capitalist countries, despite their “democratic” constitutions. It is also necessary, first, constantly to explain that only the Soviet system is capable of ensuring genuine equality of nations, by uniting first the proletarians and then the whole mass of the working population in the struggle against the bourgeoisie; and, second, that all Communist parties should render direct aid to the revolutionary movements among the dependent and underprivileged nations (for example, Ireland, the American Negroes, etc.) and in the colonies.

Without the latter condition, which is particularly important, the struggle against the oppression of dependent nations and colonies, as well as recognition of their right to secede, are but a false signboard, as is evidenced by the parties of the Second International.

10) Recognition of internationalism in word, and its replacement in deed by petty-bourgeois nationalism and pacifism, in all propaganda, agitation and practical work, is very common, not only among the parties of the Second International, but also among those which have withdrawn from it, and often even among parties which now call themselves communist. The urgency of the struggle against this evil, against the most deep-rooted petty-bourgeois national prejudices, looms ever larger with the mounting exigency of the task of converting the dictatorship of the proletariat from a national dictatorship (i.e., existing in a single country and incapable of determining world politics) into an international one (i.e., a dictatorship of the proletariat involving at least several advanced countries, and capable of exercising a decisive influence upon world politics as a whole). Petty-bourgeois nationalism proclaims as internationalism the mere recognition of the equality of nations, and nothing more. Quite apart from the fact that this recognition is purely verbal, petty-

bourgeois nationalism preserves national self-interest intact, whereas proletarian internationalism demands, first, that the interests of the proletarian struggle in any one country should be subordinated to the interests of that struggle on a world-wide scale, and, second, that a nation which is achieving victory over the bourgeoisie should be able and willing to make the greatest national sacrifices for the overthrow of international capital.

Thus, in countries that are already fully capitalist and have workers' parties that really act as the vanguard of the proletariat, the struggle against opportunist and petty-bourgeois pacifist distortions of the concept and policy of internationalism is a primary and cardinal task.

11) With regard to the more backward states and nations, in which feudal or patriarchal and patriarchal-peasant relations predominate, it is particularly important to bear in mind:

first, that all Communist parties must assist the bourgeois-democratic liberation movement in these countries, and that the duty of rendering the most active assistance rests primarily with the workers of the country the backward nation is colonially or financially dependent on;

second, the need for a struggle against the clergy and other influential reactionary and medieval elements in backward countries;

third, the need to combat Pan-Islamism and similar trends, which strive to combine the liberation movement against European and American imperialism with an attempt to strengthen the positions of the khans, landowners, mullahs, etc.;

fourth, the need, in backward countries, to give special support to the peasant movement against the landowners, against landed proprietorship, and against all manifestations or survivals of feudalism, and to strive to lend the peasant movement the most revolutionary character by establishing the closest possible alliance between the West-European communist proletariat and the revolutionary peasant movement in the East, in the colonies, and in the backward countries generally. It is particularly necessary to exert every effort to apply the basic principles of the Soviet system in countries where pre-capitalist relations predominate—by setting up “working people’s Soviets”, etc.;

fifth, the need for a determined struggle against attempts to give a communist colouring to bourgeois-democratic liberation trends in the backward countries; the Communist International

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\* In the proofs Lenin bracketed together the second and third points writing in the margin: “combine 2 and 3”.—*Ed.*

should support bourgeois-democratic national movements in colonial and backward countries only on condition that, in these countries, the elements of future proletarian parties, which will be communist not only in name, are brought together and trained to understand their special tasks, i.e., those of the struggle against the bourgeois-democratic movements within their own nations. The Communist International must enter into a temporary alliance with bourgeois democracy in the colonial and backward countries, but should not merge with it, and should under all circumstances uphold the independence of the proletarian movement even if it is in its most embryonic form;

sixth, the need constantly to explain and expose among the broadest working masses of all countries, and particularly of the backward countries, the deception systematically practised by the imperialist powers, which, under the guise of politically independent states, set up states that are wholly dependent upon them economically, financially and militarily. Under present-day international conditions there is no salvation for dependent and weak nations except in a union of Soviet republics.

12) The age-old oppression of colonial and weak nationalities by the imperialist powers has not only filled the working masses of the oppressed countries with animosity towards the oppressor nations, but has also aroused distrust in these nations in general, even in their proletariat. The despicable betrayal of socialism by the majority of the official leaders of this proletariat in 1914-19, when "defence of country" was used as a social-chauvinist cloak to conceal the defence of the "right" of their "own" bourgeoisie to oppress colonies and fleece financially dependent countries, was certain to enhance this perfectly legitimate distrust. On the other hand, the more backward the country, the stronger is the hold of small-scale agricultural production, patriarchalism and isolation, which inevitably lend particular strength and tenacity to the deepest of petty-bourgeois prejudices, i.e. to national egoism and national narrow-mindedness. These prejudices are bound to die out very slowly, for they can disappear only after imperialism and capitalism have disappeared in the advanced countries, and after the entire foundation of the backward countries' economic life has radically changed. It is therefore the duty of the class-conscious communist proletariat of all countries to regard with particular caution and attention the survivals of national sentiments in the countries and among nationalities which have been oppressed the longest; it is equally necessary to make certain concessions with a view to more rapidly overcoming this distrust and these prejudices. Complete victory over capitalism cannot be won unless the proletariat and, following it, the mass

of working people in all countries and nations throughout the world voluntarily strive for alliance and unity.

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## 2

### PRELIMINARY DRAFT THESES ON THE AGRARIAN QUESTION

FOR THE SECOND CONGRESS  
OF THE COMMUNIST INTERNATIONAL

In his article,<sup>171</sup> Comrade Marchlewski gave an excellent explanation of the reasons why the Second International, which has now become the yellow<sup>172</sup> International, failed, not only to define the revolutionary proletariat's tactics on the agrarian question, but even to pose that question properly. Comrade Marchlewski then went on to set forth the theoretical fundamentals of the Third International's communist agrarian programme.

These fundamentals can (and, I think, should) serve as the basis of the general resolution on the agrarian question for the Communist International Congress, which will meet on July 15, 1920.

The following is a preliminary draft of that resolution:

1) Only the urban and industrial proletariat, led by the Communist Party, can liberate the working masses of the countryside from the yoke of capital and landed proprietorship, from ruin and the imperialist wars which will inevitably break out again and again if the capitalist system remains. There is no salvation for the working masses of the countryside except in alliance with the communist proletariat, and unless they give the latter devoted support in its revolutionary struggle to throw off the yoke of the landowners (the big landed proprietors) and the bourgeoisie.

On the other hand, the industrial workers cannot accomplish their epoch-making mission of emancipating mankind from the yoke of capital and from wars if they confine themselves to their narrow craft, or trade interests, and smugly restrict themselves to attaining an improvement in their own conditions, which may

sometimes be tolerable in the petty-bourgeois sense. This is exactly what happens to the "labour aristocracy" of many advanced countries, who constitute the core of the so-called socialist parties of the Second International; they are actually the bitter enemies and betrayers of socialism, petty-bourgeois chauvinists and agents of the bourgeoisie within the working-class movement. The proletariat is a really revolutionary class and acts in a really socialist manner only when it comes out and acts as the vanguard of all the working and exploited people, as their leader in the struggle for the overthrow of the exploiters; this, however, cannot be achieved unless the class struggle is carried into the countryside, unless the rural working masses are united about the Communist Party of the urban proletariat, and unless they are trained by the proletariat.

2) The working and exploited people of the countryside, whom the urban proletariat must lead into the struggle or, at all events, win over, are represented in all capitalist countries by the following classes:

first, the agricultural proletariat, wage-labourers (by the year, season, or day), who obtain their livelihood by working for hire at capitalist agricultural enterprises. The organisation of this class (political, military, trade union, co-operative, cultural, educational, etc.) independently and separately from other groups of the rural population, the conduct of intensive propaganda and agitation among this class, and the winning of its support for the Soviets and the dictatorship of the proletariat constitute the *fundamental* tasks of the Communist parties in all countries.

second, the semi-proletarians or peasants who till tiny plots of land, i.e., those who obtain their livelihood partly as wage-labourers at agricultural and industrial capitalist enterprises and partly by working their own or rented plots of land, which provide their families only with part of their means of subsistence. This group of the rural working population is very numerous in all capitalist countries; its existence and special position are played down by the representatives of the bourgeoisie and by the yellow "socialists" belonging to the Second International, partly by deliberately deceiving the workers and partly by blindly submitting to the routine of petty-bourgeois views and lumping together this group with the mass of the "peasantry". This bourgeois method of duping the workers is to be seen mostly in Germany and in France, but also in America and other countries. If the work of the Communist Party is properly organised, this group will become its assured supporter, for the lot of these semi-proletarians is a very hard one and they stand to gain enormously and immediately from Soviet government and the dictatorship of the proletariat;



third, the small peasantry, i.e., the small-scale tillers who, either as owners or as tenants, hold small plots of land which enable them to satisfy the needs of their families and their farms, and do not hire outside labour. This stratum, as such, undoubtedly stands to gain by the victory of the proletariat, which will fully and immediately bring it: (a) deliverance from the necessity of paying the big landowners rent or a share of the crop (for example, the *métayers* in France, also in Italy and other countries); (b) deliverance from mortgages; (c) deliverance from the numerous forms of oppression by and dependence on the big landowners (forest lands and their use, etc.); (d) immediate aid for their farms from the proletarian state (the use of the agricultural implements and part of the buildings on the big capitalist farms confiscated by the proletariat and the immediate conversion, by the proletarian state, of the rural co-operative societies and agricultural associations from organisations which under capitalism served above all the rich and middle peasants, into organisations that will primarily assist the poor, i.e., proletarians, semi-proletarians, small peasants, etc.), and many other things.

At the same time the Communist Party must clearly realise that during the transitional period from capitalism to communism, i.e., during the dictatorship of the proletariat, this stratum, or at all events part of it, will inevitably vacillate towards unrestricted freedom of trade and the free enjoyment of the rights of private property. That is because this stratum, which, if only in a small way, is a seller of articles of consumption, has been corrupted by profiteering and by proprietary habits. However, if a firm proletarian policy is pursued, and if the victorious proletariat deals very resolutely with the big landowners and the big peasants, this stratum's vacillation cannot be considerable and cannot alter the fact that, on the whole, it will side with the proletarian revolution.

3) Taken together, the three groups enumerated above constitute the majority of the rural population in all capitalist countries. That is why the success of the proletarian revolution is fully assured, not only in the cities but in the countryside as well. The reverse view is widespread; however, it persists only, first, because of the deception systematically practised by bourgeois science and statistics, which do everything to gloss over both the gulf that separates the above-mentioned classes in the countryside from the exploiters, the landowners and capitalists, and that which separates the semi-proletarians and small peasants from the big peasants; second, it persists because of the inability and unwillingness of the heroes of the yellow Second International and of the "labour aristocracy" in the advanced countries, which has been corrupted by imperialist privileges, to conduct genuinely

proletarian revolutionary work of propaganda, agitation and organisation among the rural poor; the attention of the opportunists has always been and still is wholly concentrated on inventing theoretical and practical compromises with the bourgeoisie, including the big and middle peasants (who are dealt with below), and not on the revolutionary overthrow of the bourgeois government and the bourgeoisie by the proletariat; it persists, third, because of the obstinate refusal to understand—so obstinate as to be equivalent to a prejudice (connected with all the other bourgeois-democratic and parliamentary prejudices)—a truth which has been fully proved by Marxist theory and fully corroborated by the experience of the proletarian revolution in Russia, namely, that although the three enumerated categories of the rural population—who are incredibly downtrodden, disunited, crushed, and doomed to semi-barbarous conditions of existence in all countries, even the most advanced—are economically, socially, and culturally interested in the victory of socialism, they are capable of giving resolute support to the revolutionary proletariat only *after* the latter has won political power, only *after* it has resolutely dealt with the big landowners and capitalists, and only *after* these downtrodden people see *in practice* that they have an organised leader and champion, strong and firm enough to assist and lead them and to show them the right path.

4) In the economic sense, one should understand by “middle peasants” those small farmers who, (1) either as owners or tenants, hold plots of land that are also small but, under capitalism, are sufficient not only to provide, as a general rule, a meagre subsistence for the family and the bare minimum needed to maintain the farm, but also produce a certain surplus which may, in good years at least, be converted into capital; (2) quite frequently (for example, one farm out of two or three) resort to the employment of hired labour. A concrete example of the middle peasants in an advanced capitalist country is provided by the group of farms of five to ten hectares in Germany, in which, according to the census of 1907, the number of farms employing hired labourers is about one-third of the total number of farms in this group.\* In France, where the cultivation of special crops is more developed—for

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\* Here are the exact figures: the number of farms of five to ten hectares—652,798 (out of a total of 5,736,082); these employed 487,704 hired labourers of various kinds, while members of the farmers' families (*Familienangehörige*) working on the farms numbered 2,003,693. In Austria, according to the census of 1902 this group comprised 383,331 farms, of which 126,136 employed hired labour: the hired labourers working on these farms numbered 146,044 and the working members of the farmers' families 1,265,969. The total number of farms in Austria was 2,856,349.

example, grape-growing, which requires a very large amount of labour—this group probably employs outside hired labour to a somewhat greater extent.

The revolutionary proletariat cannot set itself the task—at least not in the immediate future or in the initial period of the dictatorship of the proletariat—of winning over this stratum, but must confine itself to the task of neutralising it, i.e., rendering it neutral in the struggle between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie. This stratum inevitably vacillates between these two forces; in the beginning of the new epoch and in the developed capitalist countries, it will, in the main, incline towards the bourgeoisie. That is because the world outlook and the sentiments of the property-owners are prevalent among this stratum, which has a direct interest in profiteering, in “freedom” of trade and in property, and stands in direct antagonism to the wage-workers. By abolishing rent and mortgages, the victorious proletariat will immediately improve the position of this stratum. In most capitalist countries, however, the proletarian state should not at once completely abolish private property; at all events, it guarantees both the small and the middle peasantry, not only the preservation of their plots of land but also their enlargement to cover the total area they usually rented (the abolition of rent).

A combination of such measures with a ruthless struggle against the bourgeoisie fully guarantees the success of the policy of neutralisation. The proletarian state must effect the transition to collective farming with extreme caution and only very gradually, by the force of example, without any coercion of the middle peasant.

5) The big peasants (*Grossbauern*) are capitalist *entrepreneurs* in agriculture, who as a rule employ several hired labourers and are connected with the “peasantry” only in their low cultural level, habits of life, and the manual labour they themselves perform on their farms. These constitute the biggest of the bourgeois strata who are open and determined enemies of the revolutionary proletariat. In all their work in the countryside, the Communist parties must concentrate their attention mainly on the struggle against this stratum, on liberating the toiling and exploited majority of the rural population from the ideological and political influence of these exploiters, etc.

Following the victory of the proletariat in the cities, all sorts of manifestations of resistance and sabotage, as well as direct armed action of a counter-revolutionary character on the part of this stratum, are absolutely inevitable. The revolutionary proletariat must therefore immediately begin the ideological and organisational preparation of the forces necessary to completely disarm this stratum and, simultaneously with the overthrow of the

capitalists in industry, to deal this stratum a most determined, ruthless and smashing blow at the very first signs of resistance; for this purpose, the rural proletariat must be armed and village Soviets organised, in which the exploiters must have no place, and in which proletarians and semi-proletarians must be ensured predominance.

However, the expropriation even of the big peasants can in no way be made an immediate task of the victorious proletariat, because the material and especially the technical conditions, as well as the social conditions, for the socialisation of such farms are still lacking. In individual and probably exceptional cases, those parts of their land which they rent out in small plots or which are particularly needed by the surrounding small-peasant population will be confiscated; the small peasants should also be guaranteed, on certain terms, the free use of part of the agricultural machinery belonging to the big peasants, etc. As a general rule, however, the proletarian state must allow the big peasants to retain their land, confiscating it only if they resist the power of the working and exploited people. The experience of the Russian proletarian revolution, in which the struggle against the big peasantry was complicated and protracted by a number of special conditions, showed nevertheless that, when taught a severe lesson for the slightest attempt at resistance, this stratum is capable of loyally fulfilling the tasks set by the proletarian state, and even begins to be imbued although very slowly with respect for the government which protects all who work and is ruthless towards the idle rich.

The special conditions which, in Russia, complicated and retarded the struggle of the proletariat against the big peasants after it had defeated the bourgeoisie were, in the main, the following: after October 25 (November 7), 1917, the Russian revolution passed through the stage of the "general democratic"—that is, basically the bourgeois-democratic—struggle of the peasantry as a whole against the landowners the cultural and numerical weakness of the urban proletariat; and, lastly, the enormous distances and extremely poor means of communication. Inasmuch as these retarding conditions do not exist in the advanced countries, the revolutionary proletariat of Europe and America should prepare far more energetically, and achieve far more rapidly, resolutely, and successfully, complete victory over the resistance of the big peasantry, completely depriving it of the slightest possibility of offering resistance. This is imperative because, until such a complete and absolute victory is achieved, the masses of the rural proletarians, semi-proletarians, and small peasants cannot be brought to accept the proletarian state as a fully stable one.

6) The revolutionary proletariat must immediately and unreservedly confiscate all landed estates, those of the big landowners, who, in capitalist countries—directly or through their tenant farmers—systematically exploit wage-labour and the neighbouring small (and, not infrequently, part of the middle) peasantry, do not themselves engage in manual labour, and are in the main descended from the feudal lords (the nobles in Russia, Germany, and Hungary, the restored seigneurs in France, the lords in Britain, and the former slave-owners in America), or are rich financial magnates, or else a mixture of both these categories of exploiters and parasites.

Under no circumstances is it permissible for Communist parties to advocate or practise compensating the big landowners for the confiscated lands, for under present-day conditions in Europe and America this would be tantamount to a betrayal of socialism and the imposition of new tribute upon the masses of working and exploited people, to whom the war has meant the greatest hardships, while it has increased the number of millionaires and enriched them.

As to the mode of cultivation of the land that the victorious proletariat confiscates from the big landowners, the distribution of that land among the peasantry for their use has been predominant in Russia, owing to her economic backwardness; it is only in relatively rare and exceptional cases that state farms have been organised on the former estates which the proletarian state runs at its own expense, converting the former wage-labourers into workers for the state and members of the Soviets, which administer the state. The Communist International is of the opinion that in the case of the advanced capitalist countries it would be correct to keep *most* of the big agricultural enterprises intact and to conduct them on the lines of the "state farms" in Russia.

It would, however, be grossly erroneous to exaggerate or to stereotype this rule and never to permit the free grant of *part* of the land that belonged to the expropriated expropriators to the neighbouring small and sometimes middle peasants.

First, the objection usually raised to this, namely, that large-scale farming is technically superior, often amounts to an indisputable theoretical truth being replaced by the worst kind of opportunism and betrayal of the revolution. To achieve the success of this revolution, the proletariat should not shrink from a temporary decline in production, any more than the bourgeois opponents of slavery in North America shrank from a temporary decline in cotton production as a consequence of the Civil War of 1863-65. What is most important to the bourgeois is production for the sake of production; what is most important to the working and exploited population is the overthrow of the exploiters

and the creation of conditions that will permit the working people to work for themselves, and not for the capitalists. It is the primary and fundamental task of the proletariat to ensure the proletarian victory and its stability. There can, however, be no stable proletarian government unless the middle peasantry is neutralised and the support is secured of a very considerable section of the small peasantry, if not all of them.

Second, not merely an increase but even the preservation of large-scale production in agriculture presupposes the existence of a fully developed and revolutionarily conscious rural proletariat with considerable experience of trade union and political organisation behind it. Where this condition does not yet exist, or where this work cannot expediently be entrusted to class-conscious and competent industrial workers, hasty attempts to set up large state-conducted farms can only discredit the proletarian government. Under such conditions, the utmost caution must be exercised and the most thorough preparations made when state farms are set up.

Third, in all capitalist countries, even the most advanced, there still exist survivals of medieval, semi-feudal exploitation of the neighbouring small peasants by the big landowners as in the case of the *Instleute* in Germany, the *métayers* in France, and the sharecroppers in the United States (not only Negroes, who, in the Southern States, are mostly exploited in this way, but sometimes whites too). In such cases it is incumbent on the proletarian state to grant the small peasants free use of the lands they formerly rented, since no other economic or technical basis exists, and it cannot be created at one stroke.

The implements and stock of the big farms must be confiscated without fail and converted into state property, with the absolute condition that, *after* the requirements of the big state farms have been met, the neighbouring small peasants may have the use of these implements gratis, in compliance with conditions drawn up by the proletarian state.

In the period immediately following the proletarian revolution, it is absolutely necessary, not only to confiscate the estates of the big landowners at once, but also to deport or to intern them all as leaders of counter-revolution and ruthless oppressors of the entire rural population. However, with the consolidation of the proletarian power in the countryside as well as in the cities, systematic efforts should be made to employ (under the special control of highly reliable communist workers) those forces within this class that possess valuable experience, know-how, and organising skill, to build large-scale socialist agriculture.

7) The victory of socialism over capitalism and the consolidation of socialism may be regarded as ensured only when the proletarian state power, having completely suppressed all resistance by the exploiters and assured itself complete subordination and stability, has reorganised the whole of industry on the lines of large-scale collective production and on a modern technical basis (founded on the electrification of the entire economy). This alone will enable the cities to render such radical assistance, technical and social, to the backward and scattered rural population, as will create the material basis necessary to boost the productivity of agricultural and of farm labour in general, thereby encouraging the small farmers by the force of example and in their own interests to adopt large-scale, collective and mechanised agriculture. Although nominally recognised by all socialists, this indisputable theoretical truth is in fact distorted by the opportunism prevalent in the yellow Second International and among the leaders of the German and the British "Independents", the French Longuetists, etc. This distortion consists in attention being directed towards the relatively remote, beautiful, and rosy future; attention is deflected from the immediate tasks of the difficult practical transition and approach to that future. In practice, it consists in preaching a compromise with the bourgeoisie and a "class truce", i.e., complete betrayal of the proletariat, which is now waging a struggle amidst the unprecedented ruin and impoverishment created everywhere by the war, and amidst the unprecedented enrichment and arrogance of a handful of millionaires resulting from that war.

It is in the countryside that a genuine possibility of a successful struggle for socialism demands, first, that all Communist parties should inculcate in the industrial proletariat a realisation of the need to make sacrifices, and be prepared to make sacrifices so as to overthrow the bourgeoisie and consolidate proletarian power—since the dictatorship of the proletariat implies both the ability of the proletariat to organise and lead all the working and exploited people, and the vanguard's ability to make the utmost sacrifices and to display the utmost heroism to that end; second, success demands that, as a result of the workers' victory, the labouring and most exploited masses in the countryside achieve an immediate and considerable improvement in their conditions at the expense of the exploiters—for without that the industrial proletariat cannot get the support of the rural areas and, in particular, will be unable to ensure the supply of food for the cities.

8) The enormous difficulty of organising and training for the revolutionary struggle the masses of rural working people, whom capitalism has reduced to a state of great wretchedness, disunity and frequently semi-medieval dependence, makes it necessary

for the Communist parties to devote special attention to the strike struggle in the rural districts, give greater support to mass strikes by the agricultural proletarians and semi-proletarians, and help develop the strike movement in every way. The experience of the Russian revolutions of 1905 and of 1917, now confirmed and extended by the experience of Germany and other advanced countries, shows that the growing mass strike struggle (into which, under certain conditions, the small peasants can and should also be drawn) is alone capable of rousing the countryside from its lethargy, awakening the class-consciousness of the exploited masses in the countryside, making them realise the need for class organisation, and revealing to them in a vivid and practical manner the importance of their alliance with the urban workers.

This Congress of the Communist International brands as traitors and renegades those socialists—to be found, unfortunately, not only in the yellow Second International, but also in the three very important European parties which have withdrawn from that International—who are not only capable of remaining indifferent to the strike struggle in the countryside, but even (like Karl Kautsky) of opposing it on the grounds that it threatens to reduce the output of articles of consumption. Neither programmes nor the most solemn declarations are of any value whatever unless it is proved in practice, in deed, that the Communists and workers' leaders are able to place above everything else in the world the development and the victory of the proletarian revolution, and to make the greatest sacrifices for it, for otherwise there is no way out, no salvation from starvation, ruin, and new imperialist wars.

In particular, it should be pointed out that the leaders of the old socialist movement and representatives of the "labour aristocracy"—who now often make verbal concessions to communism and even nominally side with it in order to preserve their prestige among the worker masses, which are rapidly becoming revolutionary—should be tested for their loyalty to the cause of the proletariat and their suitability for responsible positions in those spheres of work where the development of revolutionary consciousness and the revolutionary struggle is most marked, the resistance of the landowners and the bourgeoisie (the big peasants, the kulaks) most fierce, and the difference between the socialist compromiser and the communist revolutionary most striking.

9) The Communist parties must exert every effort to begin, as speedily as possible, to set up Soviets of Deputies in the countryside, and in the first place Soviets of hired labourers and semi-proletarians. Only if they are linked up with the mass strike struggle and with the most oppressed class can the Soviets perform their functions, and become consolidated enough to influence (and later to incorporate) the small peasants. If, however, the



strike struggle has not yet developed, and the agricultural proletariat is as yet incapable of strong organisation owing both to the severe oppression by the landowners and the big peasants and to lack of support from the industrial workers and their unions, then the formation of Soviets of Deputies in the rural areas will require lengthy preparation by means of the organisation of communist cells, even if only small ones, intensified agitation—in which the demands of communism are enunciated in the simplest manner and illustrated by the most glaring examples of exploitation and oppression—and the arrangement of systematic visits of industrial workers to the rural districts, and so on.

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# **SECOND CONGRESS OF THE COMMUNIST INTERNATIONAL<sup>173</sup>**

**JULY 19-AUGUST 7, 1920**

## **1**

### **REPORT ON THE INTERNATIONAL SITUATION AND THE FUNDAMENTAL TASKS OF THE COMMUNIST INTERNATIONAL JULY 19**

*(An ovation breaks out. All present rise to their feet and applaud. The speaker tries to begin, but the applause and cries in all languages continue. The ovation does not abate.)* Comrades, the theses on the questions of the fundamental tasks of the Communist International\* have been published in all languages and contain nothing that is materially new (particularly to the Russian comrades). That is because, in a considerable measure, they extend several of the main features of our revolutionary experience and the lessons of our revolutionary movement to a number of Western countries, to Western Europe. My report will therefore deal at greater length, if in brief outline, with the first part of my subject, namely, the international situation.

Imperialism's economic relations constitute the core of the entire international situation as it now exists. Throughout the twentieth century, this new, highest and final stage of capitalism has fully taken shape. Of course, you all know that the enormous dimensions that capital has reached are the most characteristic and essential feature of imperialism. The place of free competition has been taken by huge monopolies. An insignificant number of capitalists have, in some cases, been able to concentrate in their hands entire branches of industry; these have passed into the hands of combines, cartels, syndicates and trusts, not infrequently of an international nature. Thus, entire branches of industry, not only in single countries, but all over the world, have been taken over by monopolists in the field of finance, property rights, and partly of production. This has formed the basis for the unprecedented domination exercised by an insignificant number of very

\* See V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 31, pp. 184-201.—Ed.

big banks, financial tycoons, financial magnates who have, in fact, transformed even the freest republics into financial monarchies. Before the war this was publicly recognised by such far from revolutionary writers as, for example, Lysis in France.

This domination by a handful of capitalists achieved full development when the whole world had been partitioned, not only in the sense that the various sources of raw materials and means of production had been seized by the biggest capitalists, but also in the sense that the preliminary partition of the colonies had been completed. Some forty years ago, the population of the colonies stood at somewhat over 250,000,000, who were subordinated to six capitalist powers. Before the war of 1914, the population of the colonies was estimated at about 600,000,000, and if we add countries like Persia, Turkey, and China, which were already semi-colonies, we shall get, in round figures, a population of a thousand million people oppressed through colonial dependence by the richest, most civilised and freest countries. And you know that, apart from direct political and juridical dependence, colonial dependence presumes a number of relations of financial and economic dependence, a number of wars, which were not regarded as wars because very often they amounted to sheer massacres, when European and American imperialist troops, armed with the most up-to-date weapons of destruction, slaughtered the unarmed and defenceless inhabitants of colonial countries.

The first imperialist war of 1914-18 was the inevitable outcome of this partition of the whole world, of this domination by the capitalist monopolies, of this great power wielded by an insignificant number of very big banks—two, three, four or five in each country. This war was waged for the repartitioning of the whole world. It was waged in order to decide which of the small groups of the biggest states—the British or the German—was to obtain the opportunity and the right to rob, strangle and exploit the whole world. You know that the war settled this question in favour of the British group. And, as a result of this war, all capitalist contradictions have become immeasurably more acute. At a single stroke the war relegated about 250,000,000 of the world's inhabitants to what is equivalent to colonial status, viz., Russia, whose population can be taken at about 130,000,000, and Austria-Hungary, Germany and Bulgaria, with a total population of not less than 120,000,000. That means 250,000,000 people living in countries, of which some, like Germany, are among the most advanced, most enlightened, most cultured, and on a level with modern technical progress. By means of the Treaty of Versailles, the war imposed such terms upon these countries that advanced peoples have been reduced to a state of colonial dependence,

poverty, starvation, ruin, and loss of rights: this treaty binds them for many generations, placing them in conditions that no civilised nation has ever lived in. The following is the post-war picture of the world: at least *1,250 million* people are at once brought under the colonial yoke, exploited by a brutal capitalism, which once boasted of its love for peace, and had some right to do so some fifty years ago, when the world was not yet partitioned, the monopolies did not as yet rule, and capitalism could still develop in a relatively peaceful way, without tremendous military conflicts.

Today, after this "peaceful" period, we see a monstrous intensification of oppression, the reversion to a colonial and military oppression that is far worse than before. The Treaty of Versailles has placed Germany and the other defeated countries in a position that makes their economic existence physically impossible, deprives them of all rights, and humiliates them.

How many nations are the beneficiaries? To answer this question we must recall that the population of the United States—the only full beneficiary from the war, a country which, from a heavy debtor, has become a general creditor—is no more than 100,000,000. The population of Japan—which gained a great deal by keeping out of the European-American conflict and by seizing the enormous Asian continent—is 50,000,000. The population of Britain, which next to the above-mentioned countries gained most, is about 50,000,000. If we add the neutral countries with their very small populations, countries which were enriched by the war, we shall get, in round figures, some 250,000,000 people.

Thus you get the broad outlines of the picture of the world as it appeared after the imperialist war. In the oppressed colonies—countries which are being dismembered, such as Persia, Turkey and China, and in countries that were defeated and have been relegated to the position of colonies—there are 1,250 million inhabitants. Not more than 250,000,000 inhabit countries that have retained their old positions, but have become economically dependent upon America, and all of which, during the war, were militarily dependent, once the war involved the whole world and did not permit a single state to remain really neutral. And, finally, we have not more than 250,000,000 inhabitants in countries whose top stratum, the capitalists alone, benefited from the partition of the world. We thus get a total of about 1,750 million comprising the entire population of the world. I would like to remind you of this picture of the world, for all the basic contradictions of capitalism, of imperialism, which are leading up to revolution, all the basic contradictions in the working-class movement that have led up to the furious struggle against

the Second International, facts our chairman has referred to, are all connected with this partitioning of the world's population.

Of course, these figures give the economic picture of the world only approximately, in broad outline. And, comrades, it is natural that, with the population of the world divided in this way, exploitation by finance capital, the capitalist monopolies, has increased many times over.

Not only have the colonial and the defeated countries been reduced to a state of dependence; within each victor state the contradictions have grown more acute; all the capitalist contradictions have become aggravated. I shall illustrate this briefly with a few examples.

Let us take the national debts. We know that the debts of the principal European states increased no less than *sevenfold* in the period between 1914 and 1920. I shall quote another economic source, one of particular significance—Keynes, the British diplomat and author of *The Economic Consequences of the Peace*, who, on instructions from his government, took part in the Versailles peace negotiations, observed them on the spot from the purely bourgeois point of view, studied the subject in detail, step by step, and took part in the conferences as an economist. He has arrived at conclusions which are more weighty, more striking and more instructive than any a Communist revolutionary could draw, because they are the conclusions of a well-known bourgeois and implacable enemy of Bolshevism, which he, like the British philistine he is, imagines as something monstrous, ferocious, and bestial. Keynes has reached the conclusion that after the Peace of Versailles, Europe and the whole world are heading for bankruptcy. He has resigned, and thrown his book in the government's face with the words: "What you are doing is madness." I shall quote his figures, which can be summed up as follows.

What are the debtor-creditor relations that have developed between the principal powers? I shall convert pounds sterling into gold rubles, at a rate of ten gold rubles to one pound. Here is what we get: the United States has assets amounting to 19,000 million, its liabilities are nil. Before the war it was in Britain's debt. In his report on April 14, 1920, to the recent congress of the Communist Party of Germany, Comrade Levi very correctly pointed out that there are now only two powers in the world that can act independently, viz., Britain and America. America alone is absolutely independent financially. Before the war she was a debtor; she is now a creditor only. All the other powers in the world are debtors. Britain has been reduced to a position in which her assets total 17,000 million, and her liabilities 8,000 million.

She is already half-way to becoming a debtor nation. Moreover, her assets include about 6,000 million owed to her by Russia. Included in the debt are military supplies received by Russia during the war. When Krasin, as representative of the Russian Soviet Government, recently had occasion to discuss with Lloyd George the subject of debt agreements, he made it plain to the scientists and politicians, to the British Government's leaders, that they were labouring under a strange delusion if they were counting on getting these debts repaid. The British diplomat Keynes has already laid this delusion bare.

Of course, it is not only or even not at all a question of the Russian revolutionary government having no wish to pay the debts. No government would pay, because these debts are usurious interest on a sum that has been paid twenty times over, and the selfsame bourgeois Keynes, who does not in the least sympathise with the Russian revolutionary movement, says: "It is clear that these debts cannot be taken into account."

In regard to France, Keynes quotes the following figures: her assets amount to 3,500 million, and her liabilities to 10,500 million! And this is a country which the French themselves called the world's money-lender, because her "savings" were enormous; the proceeds of colonial and financial pillage—a gigantic capital—enabled her to grant thousands upon thousands of millions in loans, particularly to Russia. These loans brought in an enormous revenue. Notwithstanding this and notwithstanding victory, France has been reduced to debtor status.

A bourgeois American source, quoted by Comrade Braun, a Communist, in his book *Who Must Pay the War Debts?* (Leipzig, 1920), estimates the ratio of debts to national wealth as follows: in the victor countries, Britain and France, the ratio of debts to aggregate national wealth is over 50 per cent; in Italy the percentage is between 60 and 70, and in Russia 90. As you know, however, these debts do not disturb us, because we followed Keynes's excellent advice just a little before his book appeared—we annulled all our debts. (*Stormy applause.*)

In this, however, Keynes reveals the usual crankiness of the philistine: while advising that all debts should be annulled, he goes on to say that, of course, France only stands to gain by it, that, of course, Britain will not lose very much, as nothing can be got out of Russia in any case; America will lose a fair amount, but Keynes counts on American "generosity"! On this point our views differ from those of Keynes and other petty-bourgeois pacifists. We think that to get the debts annulled they will have to wait for something else to happen, and will have to try working in a direction other than counting on the "generosity" of the capitalists.

These few figures go to show that the imperialist war has created an impossible situation for the victor powers as well. This is further shown by the enormous disparity between wages and price rises. On March 8 of this year, the Supreme Economic Council, an institution charged with protecting the bourgeois system throughout the world from the mounting revolution, adopted a resolution which ended with an appeal for order, industry and thrift, provided, of course, the workers remain the slaves of capital. This Supreme Economic Council, organ of the Entente and of the capitalists of the whole world, presented the following summary.

In the United States of America food prices have risen, on the average, by 120 per cent, whereas wages have increased only by 100 per cent. In Britain, food prices have gone up by 170 per cent, and wages 130 per cent; in France, food prices—300 per cent, and wages 200 per cent; in Japan—food prices 130 per cent, and wages 60 per cent (I have analysed Comrade Braun's figures in his pamphlet and those of the Supreme Economic Council as published in *The Times*<sup>174</sup> of March 10, 1920).

In such circumstances, the workers' mounting resentment, the growth of a revolutionary temper and ideas, and the increase in spontaneous mass strikes are obviously inevitable, since the position of the workers is becoming intolerable. The workers' own experience is convincing them that the capitalists have become prodigiously enriched by the war and are placing the burden of war costs and debts upon the workers' shoulders. We recently learnt by cable that America wants to deport another 500 Communists to Russia so as to get rid of "dangerous agitators".

Even if America deports to our country, not 500 but 500,000 Russian, American, Japanese and French "agitators", that will make no difference, because there will still be the disparity between prices and wages, which they can do nothing about. The reason why they can do nothing about it is because private property is most strictly safeguarded, is "sacred" there. That should not be forgotten, because it is only in Russia that the exploiters' private property has been abolished. The capitalists can do nothing about the gap between prices and wages, and the workers cannot live on their previous wages. The old methods are useless against this calamity. Nothing can be achieved by isolated strikes, the parliamentary struggle, or the vote, because "private property is sacred", and the capitalists have accumulated such debts that the whole world is in bondage to a handful of men. Meanwhile the workers' living conditions are becoming more and more unbearable. There is no other way out but to abolish the exploiters' "private property".

In his pamphlet *Britain and the World Revolution*, valuable extracts from which were published by our *Bulletin of the People's Commissariat of Foreign Affairs*<sup>175</sup> of February 1920, Comrade Lapinsky points out that in Britain coal export prices have doubled as against those anticipated by official industrial circles.

In Lancashire things have gone so far that shares are at a premium of 400 per cent. Bank profits are at least 10-50 per cent. It should, moreover, be noted that, in determining bank profits, all bank officials are able to conceal the lion's share of profits by calling them not profits but bonuses, commissions, etc. So here, too, indisputable economic facts prove that the wealth of a tiny handful of people has grown prodigiously and that their luxury beggars description, while the poverty of the working class is steadily growing. We must particularly note the further circumstance brought out very clearly by Comrade Levi in the report I have just referred to, namely, the change in the value of money. Money has everywhere depreciated as a result of the debts, the issue of paper currency, etc. The same bourgeois source I have already mentioned, namely, the statement of the Supreme Economic Council of March 8, 1920, has calculated that in Britain the depreciation in the value of currency as against the dollar is approximately one-third, in France and Italy two-thirds, and in Germany as much as 96 per cent.

This fact shows that the "mechanism" of the world capitalist economy is falling apart. The trade relations on which the acquisition of raw materials and the sale of commodities hinge under capitalism cannot go on; they cannot continue to be based on the subordination of a number of countries to a single country—the reason being the change in the value of money. No wealthy country can exist or trade unless it sells its goods and obtains raw materials.

Thus we have a situation in which America, a wealthy country that all countries are subordinate to, cannot buy or sell. And the selfsame Keynes who went through the entire gamut of the Versailles negotiations has been compelled to acknowledge this impossibility despite his unyielding determination to defend capitalism, and all his hatred of Bolshevism. Incidentally, I do not think any communist manifesto, or one that is revolutionary in general, could compare in forcefulness with those pages in Keynes's book which depict Wilson and "Wilsonism" in action. Wilson was the idol of philistines and pacifists like Keynes and a number of heroes of the Second International (and even of the "Two-and-a-Half" International<sup>176</sup>), who exalted the "Fourteen Points"<sup>177</sup> and even wrote "learned" books about the "roots" of Wilson's policy; they hoped that Wilson would save "social peace", reconcile exploiters and exploited, and bring about social



reforms. Keynes showed vividly how Wilson was made a fool of, and all these illusions were shattered at the first impact with the practical, mercantile and huckster policy of capital as personified by Clemenceau and Lloyd George. The masses of the workers now see more clearly than ever, from their own experience—and the learned pedants could see it just by reading Keynes's book—that the "roots" of Wilson's policy lay in sanctimonious piffle, petty-bourgeois phrase-mongering, and an utter inability to understand the class struggle.

In consequence of all this, two conditions, two fundamental situations, have inevitably and naturally emerged. On the one hand, the impoverishment of the masses has grown incredibly, primarily among 1,250 million people, i.e., 70 per cent of the world's population. These are the colonial and dependent countries whose inhabitants possess no legal rights, countries "mandated" to the brigands of finance. Besides, the enslavement of the defeated countries has been sanctioned by the Treaty of Versailles and by existing secret treaties regarding Russia, whose validity, it is true, is sometimes about as real as that of the scraps of paper stating that we owe so many thousands of millions. For the first time in world history, we see robbery, slavery, dependence, poverty and starvation imposed upon 1,250 million people by a legal act.

On the other hand, the workers in each of the creditor countries have found themselves in conditions that are intolerable. The war has led to an unprecedented aggravation of all capitalist contradictions, this being the origin of the intense revolutionary ferment that is ever growing. During the war people were put under military discipline, hurled into the ranks of death, or threatened with immediate wartime punishment. Because of the war conditions people could not see the economic realities. Writers, poets, the clergy, the whole press were engaged in nothing but glorifying the war. Now that the war has ended, the exposures have begun: German imperialism with its Peace of Brest-Litovsk has been laid bare; the Treaty of Versailles, which was to have been a victory for imperialism but proved its defeat, has been exposed. Incidentally, the example of Keynes shows that in Europe and America tens and hundreds of thousands of petty-bourgeois intellectuals, and simply more or less literate and educated people, have had to follow the road taken by Keynes, who resigned and threw in the face of the government a book exposing it. Keynes has shown what is taking place and will take place in the minds of thousands and hundreds of thousands of people when they realise that all the speeches about a "war for liberty", etc., were sheer deception, and that as a result only a handful of people were enriched, while the others were ruined and reduced

to slavery. Is it not a fact that the bourgeois Keynes declares that, to survive and save the British economy, the British must secure the resumption of free commercial intercourse between Germany and Russia? How can this be achieved? By cancelling all debts, as Keynes proposes. This is an idea that has been arrived at not only by Keynes, the learned economist; millions of people are or will be getting the same idea. And millions of people hear bourgeois economists declare that there is no way out except annulling the debts; therefore "damn the Bolsheviks" (who have annulled the debts), and let us appeal to America's "generosity"! I think that, on behalf of the Congress of the Communist International, we should send a message of thanks to these economists, who have been agitating for Bolshevism.

If, on the one hand, the economic position of the masses has become intolerable, and, on the other hand, the disintegration described by Keynes has set in and is growing among the negligible minority of all-powerful victor countries, then we are in the presence of the maturing of the two conditions for the world revolution.

We now have before us a somewhat more complete picture of the whole world. We know what dependence upon a handful of rich men means to 1,250 million people who have been placed in intolerable conditions of existence. On the other hand, when the peoples were presented with the League of Nations Covenant, declaring that the League had put an end to war and would henceforth not permit anyone to break the peace, and when this Covenant, the last hope of working people all over the world, came into force, it proved to be a victory of the first order for us. Before it came into force, people used to say that it was impossible not to impose special conditions on a country like Germany, but when the Covenant was drawn up, everything would come out all right. Yet, when the Covenant was published, the bitterest opponents of Bolshevism were obliged to repudiate it! When the Covenant came into operation, it appeared that a small group of the richest countries, the "Big Four"—in the persons of Clemenceau, Lloyd George, Orlando and Wilson—had been put on the job of creating the new relations! When the machinery of the Covenant was put into operation, this led to a complete breakdown.

We saw this in the case of the wars against Russia. Weak, ruined and crushed, Russia, a most backward country, fought against all the nations, against a league of the rich and powerful states that dominate the world, and emerged victorious. We could not put up a force that was anything like the equal of theirs, and yet we proved the victors. Why was that? Because there was not a jot of unity among them, because each power worked against

the other. France wanted Russia to pay her debts and become a formidable force against Germany; Britain wanted to partition Russia, and attempted to seize the Baku oilfields and conclude a treaty with the border states of Russia. Among the official British documents there is a Paper which scrupulously enumerates all the states (fourteen in all) which some six months ago, in December 1919, pledged themselves to take Moscow and Petrograd. Britain based her policy on these states, to whom she granted loans running into millions. All these calculations have now misfired, and all the loans are unrecoverable.

Such is the situation created by the League of Nations. Every day of this Covenant's existence provides the best propaganda for Bolshevism, since the most powerful adherents of the capitalist "order" are revealing that, on every question, they put spokes in one another's wheels. Furious wrangling over the partitioning of Turkey, Persia, Mesopotamia and China is going on between Japan, Britain, America and France. The bourgeois press in these countries is full of the bitterest attacks and the angriest statements against their "colleagues" for trying to snatch the booty from under their noses. We see complete discord at the top, among this handful, this very small number of extremely rich countries. There are 1,250 million people who find it impossible to live in the conditions of servitude which "advanced" and civilised capitalism wishes to impose on them: after all, these represent 70 per cent of the world's population. This handful of the richest states—Britain, America and Japan (though Japan was able to plunder the Eastern, the Asian countries, she cannot constitute an independent financial and military force without support from another country)—these two or three countries are unable to organise economic relations, and are directing their policies toward disrupting policies of their colleagues and partners in the League of Nations. Hence the world crisis; it is these economic roots of the crisis that provide the chief reason of the brilliant successes the Communist International is achieving.

Comrades, we have now come to the question of the revolutionary crisis as the basis of our revolutionary action. And here we must first of all note two widespread errors. On the one hand, bourgeois economists depict this crisis simply as "unrest", to use the elegant expression of the British. On the other hand, revolutionaries sometimes try to prove that the crisis is absolutely insoluble.

This is a mistake. There is no such thing as an absolutely hopeless situation. The bourgeoisie are behaving like barefaced plunderers who have lost their heads; they are committing folly after folly, thus aggravating the situation and hastening their

doom. All that is true. But nobody can "prove" that it is absolutely impossible for them to pacify a minority of the exploited with some petty concessions, and suppress some movement or uprising of some section of the oppressed and exploited. To try to "prove" in advance that there is "absolutely" no way out of the situation would be sheer pedantry, or playing with concepts and catchwords. Practice alone can serve as real "proof" in this and similar questions. All over the world, the bourgeois system is experiencing a tremendous revolutionary crisis. The revolutionary parties must now "prove" in practice that they have sufficient understanding and organisation, contact with the exploited masses, and determination and skill to utilise this crisis for a successful, a victorious revolution.

It is mainly to prepare this "proof" that we have gathered at this Congress of the Communist International.

To illustrate to what extent opportunism still prevails among parties that wish to affiliate to the Third International, and how far the work of some parties is removed from preparing the revolutionary class to utilise the revolutionary crisis, I shall quote the leader of the British Independent Labour Party, Ramsay MacDonald. In his book, *Parliament and Revolution*, which deals with the basic problems that are now engaging our attention, MacDonald describes the state of affairs in what is something like a bourgeois pacifist spirit. He admits that there is a revolutionary crisis and that revolutionary sentiments are growing, that the sympathies of the workers are with the Soviets and the dictatorship of the proletariat (note that this refers to Britain) and that the dictatorship of the proletariat is better than the present dictatorship of the British bourgeoisie.

But MacDonald remains a thorough-paced bourgeois pacifist and compromiser, a petty bourgeois who dreams of a government that stands above classes. Like all bourgeois liars, sophists and pedants, MacDonald recognises the class struggle merely as a "descriptive fact". He ignores the experience of Kerensky, the Mensheviks and the Socialist-Revolutionaries of Russia, the similar experience of Hungary, Germany, etc., in regard to creating a "democratic" government allegedly standing above classes. MacDonald lulls his party and those workers who have the misfortune to regard this bourgeois as a socialist, this philistine as a leader, with the words: "We know that all this [i.e., the revolutionary crisis, the revolutionary ferment] will pass . . . settle down." The war, he says, inevitably provoked the crisis, but after the war it will all "settle down", even if not at once!

That is what has been written by a man who is leader of a party that wants to affiliate to the Third International. This is a revelation—the more valuable for its rare outspokenness—

of what is no less frequently to be seen in the top ranks of the French Socialist Party and the German Independent Social-Democratic Party, namely, not merely an inability, but also an unwillingness to take advantage, in a revolutionary sense, of the revolutionary crisis, or, in other words, both an inability and an unwillingness to really prepare the party and the class in revolutionary fashion for the dictatorship of the proletariat.

That is the main evil in very many parties which are now leaving the Second International. This is precisely why, in the theses I have submitted to the present Congress, I have dwelt most of all on the tasks connected with *preparations* for the dictatorship of the proletariat,\* and have given as concrete and exact a definition of them as possible.

Here is another example. A new book against Bolshevism was recently published. An unusually large number of books of this kind are now coming out in Europe and America; the more anti-Bolshevik books are brought out, the more strongly and rapidly mass sympathy for Bolshevism grows. I am referring to Otto Bauer's *Bolshevism or Social-Democracy?* This book clearly demonstrates to the Germans the essence of Menshevism, whose shameful role in the Russian revolution is understood well enough by the workers of all countries. Otto Bauer has produced a thoroughgoing Menshevik pamphlet, although he has concealed his own sympathy with Menshevism. In Europe and America, however, more precise information should now be disseminated about what Menshevism actually is, for it is a generic term for all allegedly socialist, Social-Democratic and other trends that are hostile to Bolshevism. It would be dull writing if we Russians were to explain to Europeans what Menshevism is. Otto Bauer has shown that in his book, and we thank in advance the bourgeois and opportunist publishers who will publish it and translate it into various languages. Bauer's book will be a useful if peculiar supplement to the textbooks on communism. Take any paragraph, any argument in Otto Bauer's book and indicate the Menshevism in it, where the roots lie of views that lead up to the actions of the traitors to socialism, of the friends of Kerensky, Scheidemann, etc.—this is a question that could be very usefully and successfully set in "examinations" designed to test whether communism has been properly assimilated. If you cannot answer this question, you are not yet a Communist, and should not join the Communist Party. (*Applause.*)

Otto Bauer has excellently expressed in a single sentence the essence of the views of world opportunism; for this, if we could do as we please in Vienna, we would put up a monument to him

in his lifetime. The use of force in the class struggle in modern democracies Otto Bauer says, would be "violence exercised against the social factors of force".

You may think that this sounds queer and unintelligible. It is an example of what Marxism has been reduced to, of the kind of banality and defence of the exploiters to which the most revolutionary theory *can* be reduced. A German variety of philistinism is required, and you get the "theory" that the "social factors of force" are: number; the degree of organisation; the place held in the process of production and distribution; activity and education. If a rural agricultural labourer or an urban working man practises revolutionary violence against a landowner or a capitalist, that is no dictatorship of the proletariat, no violence against the exploiters and the oppressors of the people. Oh, no! This is "violence against the social factors of force".

Perhaps my example sounds something like a jest. However, such is the nature of present-day opportunism that its struggle against Bolshevism becomes a jest. The task of involving the working class, all its thinking elements, in the struggle between international Menshevism (the MacDonalds, Otto Bauers and Co.) and Bolshevism is highly useful and very urgent to Europe and America.

Here we must ask: how is the persistence of such trends in Europe to be explained? Why is this opportunism stronger in Western Europe than in our country? It is because the culture of the advanced countries has been, and still is, the result of their being able to live at the expense of a thousand million oppressed people. It is because the capitalists of these countries obtain a great deal more in this way than they could obtain as profits by plundering the workers in their own countries.

Before the war, it was calculated that the three richest countries—Britain, France and Germany—got between eight and ten thousand million francs a year from the export of capital alone, apart from other sources.

It goes without saying that, out of this tidy sum, at least five hundred millions can be spent as a sop to the labour leaders and the labour aristocracy, i.e., on all sorts of bribes. The whole thing boils down to nothing but bribery. It is done in a thousand different ways: by increasing cultural facilities in the largest centres, by creating educational institutions, and by providing co-operative, trade union and parliamentary leaders with thousands of cushy jobs. This is done wherever present-day civilised capitalist relations exist. It is these thousands of millions in superprofits that form the economic basis of opportunism in the working-class movement. In America, Britain and France we see a far greater persistence of the opportunist leaders, of the upper crust of the

working class, the labour aristocracy; they offer stronger resistance to the Communist movement. That is why we must be prepared to find it harder for the European and American workers' parties to get rid of this disease than was the case in our country. We know that enormous successes have been achieved in the treatment of this disease since the Third International was formed, but we have not yet finished the job; the purging of the workers' parties, the revolutionary parties of the proletariat all over the world, of bourgeois influences, of the opportunists in their ranks, is very far from complete.

I shall not dwell on the concrete manner in which we must do that; that is dealt with in my published theses. My task consists in indicating the deep economic roots of this phenomenon. The disease is a protracted one: the cure takes longer than the optimists hoped it would. Opportunism is our principal enemy. Opportunism in the upper ranks of the working-class movement is bourgeois socialism, not proletarian socialism. It has been shown in practice that working-class activists who follow the opportunist trend are better defenders of the bourgeoisie than the bourgeois themselves. Without their leadership of the workers, the bourgeoisie could not remain in power. This has been proved, not only by the history of the Kerensky regime in Russia; it has also been proved by the democratic republic in Germany under its Social-Democratic government, as well as by Albert Thomas's attitude towards his bourgeois government. It has been proved by similar experience in Britain and the United States. This is where our principal enemy is, an enemy we must overcome. We must leave this Congress firmly resolved to carry on this struggle to the very end, in all parties. That is our main task.

Compared with this task, the rectification of the errors of the "Left" trend in communism will be an easy one. In a number of countries anti-parliamentarianism is to be seen, which has not been so much introduced by people of petty-bourgeois origin as fostered by certain advanced contingents of the proletariat out of hatred for the old parliamentarianism, out of a legitimate, proper and necessary hatred for the conduct of members of parliament in Britain, France, Italy, in all lands. Directives must be issued by the Communist International and the comrades must be made more familiar with the experience of Russia, with the significance of a genuinely proletarian political party. Our work will consist in accomplishing this task. The fight against these errors in the proletarian movement, against these shortcomings, will be a thousand times easier than fighting against those bourgeois who, in the guise of reformists, belong to the old parties of the Second International and conduct the whole of their work in a bourgeois, not proletarian, spirit.

Comrades, in conclusion I shall deal with one other aspect of the subject. Our comrade, the chairman, has said that our Congress merits the title of a World Congress. I think he is right, particularly because we have here quite a number of representatives of the revolutionary movement in the colonial and backward countries. This is only a small beginning, but the important thing is that a beginning has been made. At this Congress we see taking place a union between revolutionary proletarians of the capitalist, advanced countries, and the revolutionary masses of those countries where there is no or hardly any proletariat, i.e., the oppressed masses of colonial, Eastern countries. It is on ourselves that the consolidation of unity depends, and I am sure we shall achieve it. World imperialism shall fall when the revolutionary onslaught of the exploited and oppressed workers in each country overcoming resistance from petty-bourgeois elements and the influence of the small upper crust of labour aristocrats, merges with the revolutionary onslaught of hundreds of millions of people who have hitherto stood beyond the pale of history, and have been regarded merely as the object of history.

The imperialist war has helped the revolution: from the colonies, the backward countries, and the isolation they lived in, the bourgeoisie levied soldiers for this imperialist war. The British bourgeoisie impressed on the soldiers from India that it was the duty of the Indian peasants to defend Great Britain against Germany; the French bourgeoisie impressed on soldiers from the French colonies that it was their duty to defend France. They taught them the use of arms, a very useful thing, for which we might express our deep gratitude to the bourgeoisie—express our gratitude on behalf of all the Russian workers and peasants, and particularly on behalf of all the Russian Red Army. The imperialist war has drawn the dependent peoples into world history. And one of the most important tasks now confronting us is to consider how the foundation-stone of the organisation of the Soviet movement can be laid in the *non* capitalist countries. Soviets are possible there; they will not be workers' Soviets, but peasants' Soviets, or Soviets of working people.

Much work will have to be done; errors will be inevitable; many difficulties will be encountered along this road. It is the fundamental task of the Second Congress to elaborate or indicate the practical principles that will enable the work, till now carried on in an unorganised fashion among hundreds of millions of people, to be carried on in an organised, coherent and systematic fashion.

Now, a year or a little more after the First Congress of the Communist International, we have emerged victors over the Second International: it is not only among the workers of the civilised



countries that the ideas of the Soviets have spread; it is not only to them that they have become known and intelligible. The workers of all lands are ridiculing the wiseacres, not a few of whom call themselves socialists and argue in a learned or almost learned manner about the Soviet "system", as the German systematists are fond of calling it, or the Soviet "idea" as the British Guild Socialists<sup>178</sup> call it. Not infrequently, these arguments about the Soviet "system" or "idea" becloud the workers' eyes and their minds. However, the workers are brushing this pedantic rubbish aside and are taking up the weapon provided by the Soviets. A recognition of the role and significance of the Soviets has now also spread to the lands of the East.

The groundwork has been laid for the Soviet movement all over the East, all over Asia, among all the colonial peoples.

The proposition that the exploited must rise up against the exploiters and establish their Soviets is not a very complex one. After our experience, after two and a half years of the existence of the Soviet Republic in Russia, and after the First Congress of the Third International, this idea is becoming accessible to hundreds of millions of people oppressed by the exploiters all over the world. We in Russia are often obliged to compromise, to bide our time, since we are weaker than the international imperialists, yet we know that we are defending the interests of this mass of a thousand and a quarter million people. For the time being, we are hampered by barriers, prejudices and ignorance which are receding into the past with every passing hour; but we are more and more becoming representatives and genuine defenders of this 70 per cent of the world's population, this mass of working and exploited people. It is with pride that we can say: at the First Congress we were in fact merely propagandists; we were only spreading the fundamental ideas among the world's proletariat; we only issued the call for struggle; we were merely asking where the people were who were capable of taking this path. Today the advanced proletariat is everywhere with us. A proletarian army exists everywhere, although sometimes it is poorly organised and needs reorganising. If our comrades in all lands help us now to organise a united army, no shortcomings will prevent us from accomplishing our task. That task is the world proletarian revolution, the creation of a world Soviet republic. (*Prolonged applause.*)

## 2

**REPORT  
OF THE COMMISSION ON THE NATIONAL  
AND THE COLONIAL QUESTIONS  
JULY 26<sup>179</sup>**

Comrades, I shall confine myself to a brief introduction, after which Comrade Maring, who has been secretary to our commission, will give you a detailed account of the changes we have made in the theses. He will be followed by Comrade Roy, who has formulated the supplementary theses. Our commission have unanimously adopted both the preliminary theses,\* as amended, and the supplementary theses. We have thus reached complete unanimity on all major issues. I shall now make a few brief remarks.

First, what is the cardinal idea underlying our theses? It is the distinction between oppressed and oppressor nations. Unlike the Second International and bourgeois democracy, we emphasise this distinction. In this age of imperialism, it is particularly important for the proletariat and the Communist International to establish the concrete economic facts and to proceed from concrete realities, not from abstract postulates, in all colonial and national problems.

The characteristic feature of imperialism consists in the whole world, as we now see, being divided into a large number of oppressed nations and an insignificant number of oppressor nations, the latter possessing colossal wealth and powerful armed forces. The vast majority of the world's population, over a thousand million, perhaps even 1,250 million people, if we take the total population of the world as 1,750 million, in other words, about 70 per cent of the world's population, belong to the oppressed nations, which are either in a state of direct colonial dependence or are semi-colonies, as, for example, Persia, Turkey and China, or else, conquered by some big imperialist power, have become greatly dependent on that power by virtue of peace treaties. This idea of distinction, of dividing the nations into oppressor and oppressed, runs through the theses, not only the first theses published earlier over my signature, but also those submitted by Comrade Roy. The latter were framed chiefly from the standpoint of the situation in India and other big Asian countries oppressed by Britain. Herein lies their great importance to us.

The second basic idea in our theses is that, in the present world situation following the imperialist war, reciprocal relations be-

\* See this volume, pp. 372-79.—Ed.

tween peoples and the world political system as a whole are determined by the struggle waged by a small group of imperialist nations against the Soviet movement and the Soviet states headed by Soviet Russia. Unless we bear that in mind, we shall not be able to pose a single national or colonial problem correctly, even if it concerns a most outlying part of the world. The Communist parties, in civilised and backward countries alike, can pose and solve political problems correctly only if they make this postulate their starting-point.

Third, I should like especially to emphasise the question of the bourgeois-democratic movement in backward countries. This is a question that has given rise to certain differences. We have discussed whether it would be right or wrong, in principle and in theory, to state that the Communist International and the Communist parties must support the bourgeois-democratic movement in backward countries. As a result of our discussion, we have arrived at the unanimous decision to speak of the national-revolutionary movement rather than of the "bourgeois-democratic" movement. It is beyond doubt that any national movement can only be a bourgeois-democratic movement, since the overwhelming mass of the population in the backward countries consist of peasants who represent bourgeois-capitalist relationships. It would be utopian to believe that proletarian parties in these backward countries, if indeed they can emerge in them, can pursue communist tactics and a communist policy, without establishing definite relations with the peasant movement and without giving it effective support. However, the objections have been raised that, if we speak of the bourgeois-democratic movement, we shall be obliterating all distinctions between the reformist and the revolutionary movements. Yet that distinction has been very clearly revealed of late in the backward and colonial countries, since the imperialist bourgeoisie is doing everything in its power to implant a reformist movement among the oppressed nations too. There has been a certain *rapprochement* between the bourgeoisie of the exploiting countries and that of the colonies, so that very often—perhaps even in most cases—the bourgeoisie of the oppressed countries, while it does support the national movement, is in full accord with the imperialist bourgeoisie, i.e., joins forces with it against all revolutionary movements and revolutionary classes. This was irrefutably proved in the commission, and we decided that the only correct attitude was to take this distinction into account and, in nearly all cases, substitute the term "national-revolutionary" for the term "bourgeois-democratic". The significance of this change is that we, as Communists, should and will support bourgeois-liberation movements in the colonies only when they are genuinely revolutionary, and when their exponents

do not hinder our work of educating and organising in a revolutionary spirit the peasantry and the masses of the exploited. If these conditions do not exist, the Communists in these countries must combat the reformist bourgeoisie, to whom the heroes of the Second International also belong. Reformist parties already exist in the colonial countries, and in some cases their spokesmen call themselves Social-Democrats and socialists. The distinction I have referred to has been made in all the theses with the result, I think, that our view is now formulated much more precisely.

Next, I would like to make a remark on the subject of peasants' Soviets. The Russian Communists' practical activities in the former tsarist colonies, in such backward countries as Turkestan, etc., have confronted us with the question of how to apply the communist tactics and policy in pre-capitalist conditions. The preponderance of pre-capitalist relationships is still the main determining feature in these countries, so that there can be no question of a purely proletarian movement in them. There is practically no industrial proletariat in these countries. Nevertheless, we have assumed, we must assume, the role of leader even there. Experience has shown us that tremendous difficulties have to be surmounted in these countries. However, the practical results of our work have also shown that despite these difficulties we are in a position to inspire in the masses an urge for independent political thinking and independent political action, even where a proletariat is practically non-existent. This work has been more difficult for us than it will be for comrades in the West-European countries, because in Russia the proletariat is engrossed in the work of state administration. It will readily be understood that peasants living in conditions of semi-feudal dependence can easily assimilate and give effect to the idea of Soviet organisation. It is also clear that the oppressed masses, those who are exploited, not only by merchant capital but also by the feudalists, and by a state based on feudalism, can apply this weapon, this type of organisation, in their conditions too. The idea of Soviet organisation is a simple one, and is applicable, not only to proletarian, but also to peasant feudal and semi-feudal relations. Our experience in this respect is not as yet very considerable. However, the debate in the commission, in which several representatives from colonial countries participated, demonstrated convincingly that the Communist International's theses should point out that peasants' Soviets, Soviets of the exploited, are a weapon which can be employed, not only in capitalist countries but also in countries with pre-capitalist relations, and that it is the absolute duty of Communist parties and of elements prepared to form Communist parties, everywhere to conduct propaganda in favour of peasants' Soviets or of working people's Soviets, this to include backward and

colonial countries. Wherever conditions permit, they should at once make attempts to set up Soviets of the working people.

This opens up a very interesting and very important field for our practical work. So far our joint experience in this respect has not been extensive, but more and more data will gradually accumulate. It is unquestionable that the proletariat of the advanced countries can and should give help to the working masses of the backward countries, and that the backward countries can emerge from their present stage of development when the victorious proletariat of the Soviet Republics extends a helping hand to these masses and is in a position to give them support.

There was quite a lively debate on this question in the commission, not only in connection with the theses I signed, but still more in connection with Comrade Roy's theses, which he will defend here, and certain amendments to which were unanimously adopted.

The question was posed as follows: are we to consider as correct the assertion that the capitalist stage of economic development is inevitable for backward nations now on the road to emancipation and among whom a certain advance towards progress is to be seen since the war? We replied in the negative. If the victorious revolutionary proletariat conducts systematic propaganda among them, and the Soviet governments come to their aid with all the means at their disposal—in that event it will be mistaken to assume that the backward peoples must inevitably go through the capitalist stage of development. Not only should we create independent contingents of fighters and party organisations in the colonies and the backward countries, not only at once launch propaganda for the organisation of peasants' Soviets and strive to adapt them to the pre-capitalist conditions, but the Communist International should advance the proposition, with the appropriate theoretical grounding, that with the aid of the proletariat of the advanced countries, backward countries can go over to the Soviet system and, through certain stages of development, to communism, without having to pass through the capitalist stage.

The necessary means for this cannot be indicated in advance. These will be prompted by practical experience. It has, however, been definitely established that the idea of the Soviets is understood by the mass of the working people in even the most remote nations, that the Soviets should be adapted to the conditions of a pre-capitalist social system, and that the Communist parties should immediately begin work in this direction in all parts of the world.

I would also like to emphasise the importance of revolutionary work by the Communist parties, not only in their own, but also in the colonial countries, and particularly among the troops em-

ployed by the exploiting nations to keep the colonial peoples in subjection.

Comrade Quelch of the British Socialist Party spoke of this in our commission. He said that the rank-and-file British worker would consider it treasonable to help the enslaved nations in their uprisings against British rule. True, the jingoist and chauvinist-minded labour aristocrats of Britain and America present a very great danger to socialism, and are a bulwark of the Second International. Here we are confronted with the greatest treachery on the part of leaders and workers belonging to this bourgeois International. The colonial question has been discussed in the Second International as well. The Basle Manifesto<sup>180</sup> is quite clear on this point, too. The parties of the Second International have pledged themselves to revolutionary action, but they have given no sign of genuine revolutionary work or of assistance to the exploited and dependent nations in their revolt against the oppressor nations. This, I think, applies also to most of the parties that have withdrawn from the Second International and wish to join the Third International. We must proclaim this publicly for all to hear, and it is irrefutable. We shall see if any attempt is made to deny it.

All these considerations have formed the basis of our resolutions, which undoubtedly are too lengthy but will, nevertheless, I am sure, prove of use and will promote the development and organisation of genuine revolutionary work in connection with the national and the colonial questions. And that is our principal task.

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## THE TASKS OF THE YOUTH LEAGUES

SPEECH DELIVERED AT THE THIRD ALL-RUSSIA  
CONGRESS OF THE RUSSIAN YOUNG COMMUNIST LEAGUE  
OCTOBER 2, 1920

(*The Congress greets Lenin with a tremendous ovation.*) Comrades, today I would like to talk on the fundamental tasks of the Young Communist League and, in this connection, on what the youth organisations in a socialist republic should be like in general.

It is all the more necessary to dwell on this question because in a certain sense it may be said that it is the youth that will be faced with the actual task of creating a communist society. For it is clear that the generation of working people brought up in capitalist society can, at best, accomplish the task of destroying the foundations of the old, the capitalist way of life, which was built on exploitation. At best it will be able to accomplish the tasks of creating a social system that will help the proletariat and the working classes retain power and lay a firm foundation, which can be built on only by a generation that is starting to work under the new conditions, in a situation in which relations based on the exploitation of man by man no longer exist.

And so, in dealing from this angle with the tasks confronting the youth, I must say that the tasks of the youth in general, and of the Young Communist Leagues and all other organisations in particular, might be summed up in a single word: learn.

Of course, this is only a "single word". It does not reply to the principal and most essential questions: what to learn, and how to learn? And the whole point here is that, with the transformation of the old, capitalist society, the upbringing, training and education of the new generations that will create the communist society cannot be conducted on the old lines. The teaching, training and education of the youth must proceed from the material that has been left to us by the old society. We can build communism only on the basis of the totality of knowledge, organisations and institutions, only by using the stock of human forces and means that have been left to us by the old society. Only by

radically remoulding the teaching, organisation and training of the youth shall we be able to ensure that the efforts of the younger generation will result in the creation of a society that will be unlike the old society, i.e., in the creation of a communist society. That is why we must deal in detail with the question of what we should teach the youth and how the youth should learn if it really wants to justify the name of communist youth, and how it should be trained so as to be able to complete and consummate what we have started.

I must say that the first and most natural reply would seem to be that the Youth League, and the youth in general, who want to advance to communism, should learn communism.

But this reply—"learn communism"—is too general. What do we need in order to learn communism? What must be singled out from the sum of general knowledge so as to acquire a knowledge of communism? Here a number of dangers arise, which very often manifest themselves whenever the task of learning communism is presented incorrectly, or when it is interpreted in too one-sided a manner.

Naturally, the first thought that enters one's mind is that learning communism means assimilating the sum of knowledge that is contained in communist manuals, pamphlets and books. But such a definition of the study of communism would be too crude and inadequate. If the study of communism consisted solely in assimilating what is contained in communist books and pamphlets, we might all too easily obtain communist text-jugglers or braggarts, and this would very often do us harm, because such people, after learning by rote what is set forth in communist books and pamphlets, would prove incapable of combining the various branches of knowledge, and would be unable to act in the way communism really demands.

One of the greatest evils and misfortunes left to us by the old, capitalist society is the complete rift between books and practical life; we have had books explaining everything in the best possible manner, yet in most cases these books contained the most pernicious and hypocritical lies, a false description of capitalist society.

That is why it would be most mistaken merely to assimilate book knowledge about communism. No longer do our speeches and articles merely reiterate what used to be said about communism, because our speeches and articles are connected with our daily work in all fields. Without work and without struggle, book knowledge of communism obtained from communist pamphlets and works is absolutely worthless, for it would continue the old separation of theory and practice, the old rift which was the most pernicious feature of the old, bourgeois society.



It would be still more dangerous to set about assimilating only communist slogans. Had we not realised this danger in time, and had we not directed all our efforts to averting this danger, the half million or million young men and women who would have called themselves Communists after studying communism in this way would only greatly prejudice the cause of communism.

The question arises: how is all this to be blended for the study of communism? What must we take from the old schools, from the old kind of science? It was the declared aim of the old type of school to produce men with an all-round education, to teach the sciences in general. We know that this was utterly false, since the whole of society was based and maintained on the division of people into classes, into exploiters and oppressed. Since they were thoroughly imbued with the class spirit, the old schools naturally gave knowledge only to the children of the bourgeoisie. Every word was falsified in the interests of the bourgeoisie. In these schools the younger generation of workers and peasants were not so much educated as drilled in the interests of that bourgeoisie. They were trained in such a way as to be useful servants of the bourgeoisie, able to create profits for it without disturbing its peace and leisure. That is why, while rejecting the old type of schools, we have made it our task to take from it only what we require for genuine communist education.

This brings me to the reproaches and accusations which we constantly hear levelled at the old schools, and which often lead to wholly wrong conclusions. It is said that the old school was a school of purely book knowledge, of ceaseless drilling and grinding. That is true, but we must distinguish between what was bad in the old school and what is useful to us, and we must be able to select from it what is necessary for communism.

The old schools provided purely book knowledge; they compelled their pupils to assimilate a mass of useless, superfluous and barren knowledge, which cluttered up the brain and turned the younger generation into bureaucrats regimented according to a single pattern. But it would mean falling into a grave error for you to try to draw the conclusion that one can become a Communist without assimilating the wealth of knowledge amassed by mankind. It would be mistaken to think it sufficient to learn communist slogans and the conclusions of communist science, without acquiring that sum of knowledge of which communism itself is a result. Marxism is an example which shows how communism arose out of the sum of human knowledge.

You have read and heard that communist theory—the science of communism created in the main by Marx, this doctrine of Marxism—has ceased to be the work of a single socialist of the nineteenth century, even though he was a genius, and that it has be-

come the doctrine of millions and tens of millions of proletarians all over the world, who are applying it in their struggle against capitalism. If you were to ask why the teachings of Marx have been able to win the hearts and minds of millions and tens of millions of the most revolutionary class, you would receive only one answer: it was because Marx based his work on the firm foundation of the human knowledge acquired under capitalism. After making a study of the laws governing the development of human society, Marx realised the inevitability of capitalism developing towards communism. What is most important is that he proved this on the sole basis of a most precise, detailed and profound study of this capitalist society, by fully assimilating all that earlier science had produced. He critically reshaped everything that had been created by human society, without ignoring a single detail. He reconsidered, subjected to criticism, and verified on the working-class movement everything that human thinking had created, and therefrom formulated conclusions which people hemmed in by bourgeois limitations or bound by bourgeois prejudices could not draw.

We must bear this in mind when, for example, we talk about proletarian culture.<sup>181</sup> We shall be unable to solve this problem unless we clearly realise that only a precise knowledge and transformation of the culture created by the entire development of mankind will enable us to create a proletarian culture. The latter is not clutched out of thin air; it is not an invention of those who call themselves experts in proletarian culture. That is all nonsense. Proletarian culture must be the logical development of the store of knowledge mankind has accumulated under the yoke of capitalist, landowner and bureaucratic society. All these roads have been leading, and will continue to lead up to proletarian culture, in the same way as political economy, as reshaped by Marx, has shown us what human society must arrive at, shown us the passage to the class struggle, to the beginning of the proletarian revolution.

When we so often hear representatives of the youth, as well as certain advocates of a new system of education, attacking the old schools, claiming that they used the system of cramming, we say to them that we must take what was good in the old schools. We must not borrow the system of encumbering young people's minds with an immense amount of knowledge, nine-tenths of which was useless and one tenth distorted. This, however, does not mean that we can restrict ourselves to communist conclusions and learn only communist slogans. You will not create communism that way. You can become a Communist only when you enrich your mind with a knowledge of all the treasures created by mankind.

We have no need of cramming, but we do need to develop and

perfect the mind of every student with a knowledge of fundamental facts. Communism will become an empty word, a mere sign-board, and a Communist a mere boaster, if all the knowledge he has acquired is not digested in his mind. You should not merely assimilate this knowledge, but assimilate it critically, so as not to cram your mind with useless lumber, but enrich it with all those facts that are indispensable to the well-educated man of today. If a Communist took it into his head to boast about his communism because of the cut-and-dried conclusions he had acquired, without putting in a great deal of serious and hard work and without understanding facts he should examine critically, he would be a deplorable Communist indeed. Such superficiality would be decidedly fatal. If I know that I know little, I shall strive to learn more; but if a man says that he is a Communist and that he need not know anything thoroughly, he will never become anything like a Communist.

The old schools produced servants needed by the capitalists; the old schools turned men of science into men who had to write and say whatever pleased the capitalists. We must therefore abolish them. But does the fact that we must abolish them, destroy them, mean that we should not take from them everything mankind has accumulated that is essential to man? Does it mean that we do not have to distinguish between what was necessary to capitalism and what is necessary to communism?

We are replacing the old drill-sergeant methods practised in bourgeois society, against the will of the majority, with the class-conscious discipline of the workers and peasants, who combine hatred of the old society with a determination, ability and readiness to unite and organise their forces for this struggle so as to forge the wills of millions and hundreds of millions of people—disunited, and scattered over the territory of a huge country—into a single will, without which defeat is inevitable. Without this solidarity, without this conscious discipline of the workers and peasants, our cause is hopeless. Without this, we shall be unable to vanquish the capitalists and landowners of the whole world. We shall not even consolidate the foundation, let alone build a new, communist society on that foundation. Likewise, while condemning the old schools, while harbouring an absolutely justified and necessary hatred for the old schools, and appreciating the readiness to destroy them, we must realise that we must replace the old system of instruction, the old cramming and the old drill, with an ability to acquire the sum total of human knowledge, and to acquire it in such a way that communism shall not be something to be learned by rote, but something that you yourselves have thought over, something that will embody conclusions inevitable from the standpoint of present-day education.

That is the way the main tasks should be presented when we speak of the aim: learn communism.

I shall take a practical example to make this clear to you, and to demonstrate the approach to the problem of how you must learn. You all know that, following the military problems, those of defending the republic, we are now confronted with economic tasks. Communist society, as we know, cannot be built unless we restore industry and agriculture, and that, not in the old way. They must be re-established on a modern basis, in accordance with the last word in science. You know that electricity is that basis, and that only after electrification of the entire country, of all branches of industry and agriculture, only when you have achieved that aim, will you be able to build for yourselves the communist society which the older generation will not be able to build. Confronting you is the task of economically reviving the whole country, of reorganising and restoring both agriculture and industry on modern technical lines, based on modern science and technology, on electricity. You realise perfectly well that illiterate people cannot tackle electrification, and that elementary literacy is not enough either. It is insufficient to understand what electricity is; what is needed is the knowledge of how to apply it technically in industry and agriculture, and in the individual branches of industry and agriculture. This has to be learnt for oneself, and it must be taught to the entire rising generation of working people. That is the task confronting every class-conscious Communist, every young person who regards himself a Communist and who clearly understands that, by joining the Young Communist League, he has pledged himself to help the Party build communism and to help the whole younger generation create a communist society. He must realise that he can create it only on the basis of modern education, and if he does not acquire this education communism will remain merely a pious wish.

It was the task of the older generation to overthrow the bourgeoisie. The main task then was to criticise the bourgeoisie, arouse hatred of the bourgeoisie among the masses, and foster class-consciousness and the ability to unite their forces. The new generation is confronted with a far more complex task. Your duty does not lie only in assembling your forces so as to uphold the workers' and peasants' government against an invasion instigated by the capitalists. Of course, you must do that; that is something you clearly realise, and is distinctly seen by the Communist. However, that is not enough. You have to build up a communist society. In many respects half of the work has been done. The old order has been destroyed, just as it deserved, it has been turned into a heap of ruins, just as it deserved. The ground has been cleared,

and on this ground the younger communist generation must build a communist society. You are faced with the task of construction, and you can accomplish that task only by assimilating all modern knowledge, only if you are able to transform communism from cut-and-dried and memorised formulas, counsels, recipes, prescriptions and programmes into that living reality which gives unity to your immediate work, and only if you are able to make communism a guide in all your practical work.

That is the task you should pursue in educating, training and rousing the entire younger generation. You must be foremost among the millions of builders of a communist society in whose ranks every young man and young woman should be. You will not build a communist society unless you enlist the mass of young workers and peasants in the work of building communism.

This naturally brings me to the question of how we should teach communism and what the specific features of our methods should be.

I first of all shall deal here with the question of communist ethics.

You must train yourselves to be Communists. It is the task of the Youth League to organise its practical activities in such a way that, by learning, organising, uniting and fighting, its members shall train both themselves and all those who look to it for leadership; it should train Communists. The entire purpose of training, educating and teaching the youth of today should be to imbue them with communist ethics.

But is there such a thing as communist ethics? Is there such a thing as communist morality? Of course, there is. It is often suggested that we have no ethics of our own; very often the bourgeoisie accuse us Communists of rejecting all morality. This is a method of confusing the issue, of throwing dust in the eyes of the workers and peasants.

In what sense do we reject ethics, reject morality?

In the sense given to it by the bourgeoisie, who based ethics on God's commandments. On this point we, of course, say that we do not believe in God, and that we know perfectly well that the clergy, the landowners and the bourgeoisie invoked the name of God so as to further their own interests as exploiters. Or, instead of basing ethics on the commandments of morality, on the commandments of God, they based it on idealist or semi-idealist phrases, which always amounted to something very similar to God's commandments.

We reject any morality based on extra-human and extra-class concepts. We say that this is deception, duplicity, stultification of the workers and peasants in the interests of the landowners and capitalists.

We say that our morality is entirely subordinated to the interests of the proletariat's class struggle. Our morality stems from the interests of the class struggle of the proletariat.

The old society was based on the oppression of all the workers and peasants by the landowners and capitalists. We had to destroy all that, and overthrow them but to do that we had to create unity. That is something that God cannot create.

This unity could be provided only by the factories, only by a proletariat trained and roused from its long slumber. Only when that class was formed did a mass movement arise which has led to what we have now—the victory of the proletarian revolution in one of the weakest of countries, which for three years has been repelling the onslaught of the bourgeoisie of the whole world. We can see how the proletarian revolution is developing all over the world. On the basis of experience, we now say that only the proletariat could have created the solid force which the disunited and scattered peasantry are following and which has withstood all onslaughts by the exploiters. Only this class can help the working masses unite, rally their ranks and conclusively defend, conclusively consolidate and conclusively build up a communist society.

That is why we say that to us there is no such thing as a morality that stands outside human society; that is a fraud. To us morality is subordinated to the interests of the proletariat's class struggle.

What does that class struggle consist in? It consists in overthrowing the tsar, overthrowing the capitalists, and abolishing the capitalist class.

What are classes in general? Classes are that which permits one section of society to appropriate the labour of another section. If one section of society appropriates all the land, we have a landowner class and a peasant class. If one section of society owns the factories, shares and capital, while another section works in these factories, we have a capitalist class and a proletarian class.

It was not difficult to drive out the tsar—that required only a few days. It was not very difficult to drive out the landowners—that was done in a few months. Nor was it very difficult to drive out the capitalists. But it is incomparably more difficult to abolish classes; we still have the division into workers and peasants. If the peasant is installed on his plot of land and appropriates his surplus grain, that is, grain that he does not need for himself or for his cattle, while the rest of the people have to go without bread, then the peasant becomes an exploiter. The more grain he clings to, the more profitable he finds it; as for the rest, let them starve: "The more they starve, the dearer I can sell this grain." All should work according to a single common plan, on common land, in common factories and in accordance with a common

system. Is that easy to attain? You see that it is not as easy as driving out the *tsar*, the landowners and the capitalists. What is required is that the proletariat re-educate a section of the peasantry; it must win over the working peasants in order to crush the resistance of those peasants who are rich and are profiting from the poverty and want of the rest. Hence the task of the proletarian struggle is not quite completed after we have overthrown the *tsar* and driven out the landowners and capitalists; to accomplish that is the task of the system we call the dictatorship of the proletariat.

The class struggle is continuing; it has merely changed its forms. It is the class struggle of the proletariat to prevent the return of the old exploiters, to unite in a single union the scattered masses of unenlightened peasants. The class struggle is continuing and it is our task to subordinate all interests to that struggle. Our communist morality is also subordinated to that task. We say: morality is what serves to destroy the old exploiting society and to unite all the working people around the proletariat, which is building up a new, a communist society.

Communist morality is that which serves this struggle and unites the working people against all exploitation, against all petty private property; for petty property puts into the hands of one person that which has been created by the labour of the whole of society. In our country the land is common property.

But suppose I take a piece of this common property and grow on it twice as much grain as I need, and profiteer on the surplus? Suppose I argue that the more starving people there are, the more they will pay? Would I then be behaving like a Communist? No, I would be behaving like an exploiter, like a proprietor. That must be combated. If that is allowed to go on, things will revert to the rule of the capitalists, to the rule of the bourgeoisie, as has more than once happened in previous revolutions. To prevent the restoration of the rule of the capitalists and the bourgeoisie, we must not allow profiteering; we must not allow individuals to enrich themselves at the expense of the rest; the working people must unite with the proletariat and form a communist society. This is the principal feature of the fundamental task of the League and the organisation of the communist youth.

The old society was based on the principle: rob or be robbed; work for others or make others work for you; be a slave-owner or a slave. Naturally, people brought up in such a society assimilate with their mother's milk, one might say, the psychology, the habit, the concept which says: you are either a slave-owner or a slave, or else, a small owner, a petty employee, a petty official, or an intellectual—in short, a man who is concerned only with himself, and does not care a rap for anybody else.

If I work this plot of land, I do not care a rap for anybody else; if others starve, all the better, I shall get the more for my grain. If I have a job as a doctor, engineer, teacher, or clerk, I do not care a rap for anybody else. If I toady to and please the powers that be, I may be able to keep my job, and even get on in life and become a bourgeois. A Communist cannot harbour such a psychology and such sentiments. When the workers and peasants proved that they were able, by their own efforts, to defend themselves and create a new society—that was the beginning of the new and communist education, education in the struggle against the exploiters, education in alliance with the proletariat against the self-seekers and petty proprietors, against the psychology and habits which say: I seek my own profit and don't care a rap for anything else.

That is the reply to the question of how the young and rising generation should learn communism.

I can learn communism only by linking up every step in its studies, training and education with the continuous struggle the proletarians and the working people are waging against the old society of exploiters. When people tell us about morality, we say: to a Communist all morality lies in this united discipline and conscious mass struggle against the exploiters. We do not believe in an eternal morality, and we expose the falseness of all the fables about morality. Morality serves the purpose of helping human society rise to a higher level and rid itself of the exploitation of labour.

To achieve this we need that generation of young people who began to reach political maturity in the midst of a disciplined and desperate struggle against the bourgeoisie. In this struggle that generation is training genuine Communists; it must subordinate to this struggle, and link up with it, each step in its studies, education and training. The education of the communist youth must consist, not in giving them suave talks and moral precepts. This is not what education consists in. When people have seen the way in which their fathers and mother lived under the yoke of the landowners and capitalists, when they have themselves experienced the sufferings of those who began the struggle against the exploiters; when they have seen the sacrifices made to keep what has been won, and seen what deadly enemies the landowners and capitalists are—they are taught by these conditions to become Communists. Communist morality is based on the struggle for the consolidation and completion of communism. That is also the basis of communist training, education, and teaching. That is the reply to the question of how communism should be learnt.

We could not believe in teaching, training and education if they were restricted only to the schoolroom and divorced from the



ferment of life. As long as the workers and peasants are oppressed by the landowners and capitalists, and as long as the schools are controlled by the landowners and capitalists, the young generation will remain blind and ignorant. Our schools must provide the youth with the fundamentals of knowledge, the ability to evolve communist views independently; they must make educated people of the youth. While they are attending school, they must learn to become participants in the struggle for emancipation from the exploiters. The Young Communist League will justify its name as the League of the young communist generation only when every step in its teaching, training and education is linked up with participation in the common struggle of all working people against the exploiters. You are well aware that, as long as Russia remains the only workers' republic and the old, bourgeois system exists in the rest of the world, we shall be weaker than they are, and be constantly threatened with a new attack; and that only if we learn to be solidly united shall we win in the further struggle and—having gained strength—become really invincible. Thus, to be a Communist means that you must organise and unite the entire young generation and set an example of training and discipline in this struggle. Then you will be able to start building the edifice of communist society and bring it to completion.

To make this clearer to you, I shall quote an example. We call ourselves Communists. What is a Communist? Communist is a Latin word. *Communis* is the Latin for "common". Communist society is a society in which all things—the land, the factories—are owned in common and the people work in common. That is communism.

Is it possible to work in common if each one works separately on his own plot of land? Work in common cannot be brought about all at once. That is impossible. It does not drop from the skies. It comes through toil and suffering; it is created in the course of struggle. The old books are of no use here; no one will believe them. One's own experience of life is needed. When Kolchak and Denikin were advancing from Siberia and the South, the peasants were on their side. They did not like Bolshevism because the Bolsheviks took their grain at a fixed price. But when the peasants in Siberia and the Ukraine experienced the rule of Kolchak and Denikin, they realised that they had only one alternative: either to go to the capitalists, who would at once hand them over into slavery under the landowners; or to follow the workers, who, it is true, did not promise a land flowing with milk and honey, and demanded iron discipline and firmness in an arduous struggle, but would lead them out of enslavement by the capitalists and landowners. When even the ignorant peasants saw and realised this from their own experience, they became conscious adherents of

communism, who had gone through a severe school. It is such experience that must form the basis of all the activities of the Young Communist League.

I have replied to the questions of what we must learn, what we must take from the old schools and from the old science. I shall now try to answer the question of how this must be learnt. The answer is: only by inseparably linking each step in the activities of the schools, each step in training, education and teaching, with the struggle of all the working people against the exploiters.

I shall quote a few examples from the experience of the work of some of the youth organisations so as to illustrate how this training in communism should proceed. Everybody is talking about abolishing illiteracy. You know that a communist society cannot be built in an illiterate country. It is not enough for the Soviet government to issue an order, or for the Party to issue a particular slogan, or to assign a certain number of the best workers to this task. The young generation itself must take up this work. Communism means that the youth, the young men and women who belong to the Youth League, should say: this is our job, we shall unite and go into the rural districts to abolish illiteracy, so that there shall be no illiterates among our young people. We are trying to get the rising generation to devote their activities to this work. You know that we cannot rapidly transform an ignorant and illiterate Russia into a literate country. But if the Youth League sets to work on the job, and if all young people work for the benefit of all, the League, with a membership of 400,000 young men and women, will be entitled to call itself a Young Communist League. It is also a task of the League, not only to acquire knowledge itself, but to help those young people who are unable to extricate themselves by their own efforts from the toils of illiteracy. Being a member of the Youth League means devoting one's labour and efforts to the common cause. That is what a communist education means. Only in the course of such work do young men and women become real Communists. Only if they achieve practical results in this work will they become Communists.

Take, for example, work in the suburban vegetable gardens. Is that not a real job of work? It is one of the tasks of the Young Communist League. People are starving; there is hunger in the factories. To save ourselves from starvation, vegetable gardens must be developed. But farming is being carried on in the old way. Therefore, more class-conscious elements should engage in this work, and then you will find that the number of vegetable gardens will increase, their acreage will grow, and the results will improve. The Young Communist League must take an active part in this work. Every League and League branch should regard this as its duty.

The Young Communist League must be a shock force, helping in every job and displaying initiative and enterprise. The League should be an organisation enabling any worker to see that it consists of people whose teachings he perhaps does not understand, and whose teachings he may not immediately believe, but from whose practical work and activity he can see that they are really people who are showing him the right road.

If the Young Communist League fails to organise its work in this way in all fields, it will mean that it is reverting to the old bourgeois path. We must combine our education with the struggle of the working people against the exploiters, so as to help the former accomplish the tasks set by the teachings of communism.

The members of the League should use every spare hour to improve the vegetable gardens, or to organise the education of young people at some factory, and so on. We want to transform Russia from a poverty-stricken and wretched country into one that is wealthy. The Young Communist League must combine its education, learning and training with the labour of the workers and peasants, so as not to confine itself to schools or to reading communist books and pamphlets. Only by working side by side with the workers and peasants can one become a genuine Communist. It has to be generally realised that all members of the Youth League are literate people and at the same time are keen at their jobs. When everyone sees that we have ousted the old drill-ground methods from the old schools and have replaced them with conscious discipline, that all young men and women take part in subbotniks, and utilise every suburban farm to help the population—people will cease to regard labour in the old way.

It is the task of the Young Communist League to organise assistance everywhere, in village or city block, in such matters as—and I shall take a small example—public hygiene or the distribution of food. How was this done in the old, capitalist society? Everybody worked only for himself and nobody cared a straw for the aged and the sick, or whether housework was the concern only of the women, who, in consequence, were in a condition of oppression and servitude. Whose business is it to combat this? It is the business of the Youth Leagues, which must say: we shall change all this; we shall organise detachments of young people who will help to assure public hygiene or distribute food, who will conduct systematic house-to-house inspections, and work in an organised way for the benefit of the whole of society, distributing their forces properly and demonstrating that labour must be organised.

The generation of people who are now at the age of fifty cannot expect to see a communist society. This generation will be

gone before then. But the generation of those who are now fifteen will see a communist society, and will itself build this society. This generation should know that the entire purpose of their lives is to build a communist society. In the old society, each family worked separately and labour was not organised by anybody except the landowners and capitalists, who oppressed the masses of the people. We must organise all labour, no matter how toilsome or messy it may be, in such a way that every worker and peasant will be able to say: I am part of the great army of free labour, and shall be able to build up my life without the landowners and capitalists, able to help establish a communist system. The Young Communist League should teach all young people to engage in conscious and disciplined labour from an early age.<sup>1</sup> In this way we can be confident that the problems now confronting us will be solved. We must assume that no less than ten years will be required for the electrification of the country, so that our impoverished land may profit from the latest achievements of technology. And so, the generation of those who are now fifteen years old, and will be living in a communist society in ten or twenty years' time, should tackle all its educational tasks in such a way that every day, in every village and city, the young people shall engage in the practical solution of some problem of labour in common, even though the smallest or the simplest. The success of communist construction will be assured when this is done in every village, as communist emulation develops, and the youth prove that they can unite their labour. Only by regarding your every step from the standpoint of the success of that construction, and only by asking ourselves whether we have done all we can to be united and politically-conscious working people will the Young Communist League succeed in uniting its half a million members into a single army of labour and win universal respect. (*Stormy applause.*)

*Pravda* Nos. 221, 222 and 223,  
October 5, 6 and 7, 1920

*Collected Works*, Vol. 31,  
pp. 283-99

<sup>1</sup> In *Pravda* No. 223, November 7, 1920, the words "from twelve years old" appear instead of "from an early age".—*Ed.*

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## ON PROLETARIAN CULTURE<sup>182</sup>

We see from *Izvestia* of October 8 that, in his address to the Proletcult Congress, Comrade Lunacharsky said things that were *diametrically opposite* to what he and I had agreed upon yesterday.<sup>183</sup>

It is necessary that a draft resolution (of the Proletcult Congress) should be drawn up with the utmost urgency, and that it should be endorsed by the Central Committee, in time to have it put to the vote *at this very session* of the Proletcult. On behalf of the Central Committee it should be submitted not later than today, for endorsement both by the Collegium of the People's Commissariat of Education and by the Proletcult Congress, because the Congress is closing today.

### DRAFT RESOLUTION

1) All educational work in the Soviet Republic of workers and peasants, in the field of political education in general and in the field of art in particular, should be imbued with the spirit of the class struggle being waged by the proletariat for the successful achievement of the aims of its dictatorship, i.e., the overthrow of the bourgeoisie, the abolition of classes, and the elimination of all forms of exploitation of man by man.

2) Hence, the proletariat, both through its vanguard—the Communist Party—and through the many types of proletarian organisations in general, should display the utmost activity and play the leading part in all the work of public education.

3) All the experience of modern history and, particularly, the more than half-century-old revolutionary struggle of the proletariat of all countries since the appearance of the *Communist Manifesto* has unquestionably demonstrated that the Marxist

world outlook is the only true expression of the interests, the viewpoint, and the culture of the revolutionary proletariat.

4) Marxism has won its historic significance as the ideology of the revolutionary proletariat because, far from rejecting the most valuable achievements of the bourgeois epoch, it has, on the contrary, assimilated and refashioned everything of value in the more than two thousand years of the development of human thought and culture. Only further work on this basis and in this direction, inspired by the practical experience of the proletarian dictatorship as the final stage in the struggle against every form of exploitation, can be recognised as the development of a genuine proletarian culture.

5) Adhering unswervingly to this stand of principle, the All Russia Proletcult Congress rejects in the most resolute manner, as theoretically unsound and practically harmful, all attempts to invent one's own particular brand of culture, to remain isolated in self-contained organisations, to draw a line dividing the field of work of the People's Commissariat of Education and the Proletcult, or to set up a Proletcult "autonomy" within establishments under the People's Commissariat of Education and so forth. On the contrary, the Congress enjoins all Proletcult organisations to fully consider themselves in duty bound to act as auxiliary bodies of the network of establishments under the People's Commissariat of Education, and to accomplish their tasks under the general guidance of the Soviet authorities (specifically, of the People's Commissariat of Education) and of the Russian Communist Party, as part of the tasks of the proletarian dictatorship.

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Comrade Lunacharsky says that his words have been distorted. In that case this resolution is needed *all the more* urgently.

Written on October 8, 1920

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pp 316-17

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**SPEECH**  
**DELIVERED AT AN ALL-RUSSIA CONFERENCE**  
**OF POLITICAL EDUCATION WORKERS**  
**OF GUBERNIA**  
**AND UYEZD EDUCATION DEPARTMENTS**  
**NOVEMBER 3, 1920**

Comrades, allow me to speak on several ideas, some of which were dealt with by the Central Committee of the Communist Party and by the Council of People's Commissars in connection with the formation of the Chief Committee for Political Education, while others came to me in connection with the draft submitted to the Council of People's Commissars. This draft was adopted yesterday as a basis; its details have still to be discussed.<sup>184</sup>

I shall permit myself only to say, for my part, that at first I was highly averse to any change in the name of your institution. In my opinion, the function of the People's Commissariat of Education is to help people learn and teach others. My Soviet experience has taught me to regard titles as childish jokes; after all, any title is a joke in its way. Another name has now been endorsed: the Chief Committee for Political Education.

As this matter has already been decided, you must take this as nothing more than a personal remark. If the matter is not limited merely to a change of label, it is only to be welcomed.

If we succeed in drawing new people into cultural and educational work, it will not be just a change of title, and then we can reconcile ourselves to the "Soviet" weakness of sticking a label on every new undertaking and every new institution. If we succeed, we shall have achieved something more than ever before.

The link between education and our policy should be the chief inducement in making people join us in our cultural and educational work. A title may express something if there is a need for it, for along the whole line of our educational work we have to abandon the old standpoint that education should be non-political; we cannot conduct educational work in isolation from politics.

*That idea has always predominated in bourgeois society. The very term "apolitical" or "non-political" education is a piece of*

bourgeois hypocrisy, nothing but humbuggery practised on the masses, 99 per cent of whom are humiliated and degraded by the rule of the church, private property and the like. That, in fact, is the way the bourgeoisie, still in the saddle in all bourgeois countries, is deceiving the masses.

The greater the importance of a political apparatus in such countries, the less its independence of capital and its policy.

In all bourgeois states the connection between the political apparatus and education is very strong, although bourgeois society cannot frankly acknowledge it. Nevertheless, this society inductrinates the masses through the church and the institution of private property.

It is one of our basic tasks to contrapose our own truth to bourgeois "truth", and win its recognition.

The transition from bourgeois society to the policy of the proletariat is a very difficult one, all the more so for the bourgeoisie is incessantly slandering us through its entire apparatus of propaganda and agitation. It bends every effort to play down an even more important mission of the dictatorship of the proletariat, its educational mission, which is particularly important in Russia, where the proletariat constitutes a minority of the population. Yet in Russia this mission must be given priority, for we must prepare the masses to build up socialism. The dictatorship of the proletariat would have been out of the question if, in the struggle against the bourgeoisie, the proletariat had not developed a keen class-consciousness, strict discipline and profound devotion, in other words, all the qualities required to assure the proletariat's complete victory over its old enemy.

We do not hold the utopian view that the working masses are ready for a socialist society. From precise facts provided by the entire history of working-class socialism we know that this is not the case, and that preparedness for socialism is created only by large-scale industry, by the strike struggle and by political organisation. To win the victory and accomplish the socialist revolution, the proletariat must be capable of concerted action, of overthrowing the exploiters. We now see that it has acquired all the necessary qualities, and that it translated them into action when it won power.

Education workers, and the Communist Party as the vanguard in the struggle, should consider it their fundamental task to help enlighten and instruct the working masses, in order to cast off the old ways and habituated routine we have inherited from the old system, the private property habits the masses are thoroughly imbued with. *This fundamental task of the entire socialist revolution should never be neglected during consideration of the particular problems that have demanded so much*



attention from the Party's Central Committee and the Council of People's Commissars. What kind of structure should the Chief Committee for Political Education have? How should it be linked up with other institutions? How should it be linked up, not only with the centre but with local bodies? These questions will be answered by comrades who are more competent in the matter, have already gained considerable experience, and have made a special study of the matter. I would like merely to stress the main principles involved. We must put the matter frankly and openly affirm, despite all the old untruths, that education cannot but be linked up with politics.

We are living in an historic period of struggle against the world bourgeoisie, which is far stronger than we are. At this stage of the struggle, we have to safeguard the development of the revolution and combat the bourgeoisie in the military sense and still more by means of our ideology through education, so that the habits, usages and convictions acquired by the working class in the course of many decades of struggle for political liberty—the sum total of these habits, usages and ideas—should serve as an instrument for the education of all working people. It is for the proletariat to decide how the latter are to be educated. We must inculcate in the working people the realisation that it is impossible and inexcusable to stand aside in the proletariat's struggle, which is now spreading more and more to all capitalist countries in the world, and to stand aside in international politics. An alliance of all the world's powerful capitalist countries against Soviet Russia—such is the real basis of international politics today. And it must, after all, be realised that on this will depend the fate of hundreds of millions of working people in the capitalist countries. We know that, at the present moment, there is not a corner of the earth which is not under the control of a small group of capitalist countries. Thus the situation is shaping in such a way that one is faced with the alternative of standing aloof from the present struggle and thereby proving one's utter lack of political consciousness, just like those benighted people who have held aloof from the revolution and the war and do not see the bourgeoisie's gross deception of the masses, the deliberate way in which the bourgeoisie is keeping the masses in ignorance; or else of joining the struggle for the dictatorship of the proletariat.

It is with absolute frankness that we speak of this struggle of the proletariat; each man must choose between joining our side or the other side. Any attempt to avoid taking sides in this issue must end in fiasco.

Observation of the many remnants of the Kerensky gang, the Socialist-Revolutionaries and the Social-Democrats, as represented

by the Yudeniches, Kolchaks, Petlyuras, Makhnos and others, has shown us such a variety of forms and shades of counter-revolution in various parts of Russia that we have every reason to consider ourselves far more steeled in the struggle than anybody else is. A glance at Western Europe shows the same thing happening there as in our country—a repetition of our own history. Almost everywhere elements similar to the Kerensky gang are to be met alongside the bourgeoisie. They predominate in a number of countries, especially Germany. One can see the same thing everywhere—the impossibility of taking an intermediate position, and a clear realisation that there must be either a white-guard dictatorship (for which the bourgeoisie of all the countries of Western Europe are preparing by arming against us), or the dictatorship of the proletariat. We have experienced this so acutely and profoundly that there is no need for me to talk at length about the Russian Communists. Hence there can be only a single conclusion, one that should be the corner-stone of all arguments and theories about the Chief Committee for Political Education: the primacy of the Communist Party's policy must be frankly recognised in the work of that body. We know of no other form of guidance; and no other has been evolved in any country. Parties may represent the interests of their class in one degree or another; they may undergo changes or modifications, but we do not yet know of any better form. The entire course of the struggle waged by Soviet Russia, which for three years has withstood the onslaught of world imperialism, is bound up with the fact that the Party has consciously set out to help the proletariat perform its function of educator, organiser and leader, without which the collapse of capitalism is impossible. The working masses, the masses of peasants and workers, must oust the old intellectualist habits and re-educate themselves for the work of building communism. Otherwise the work of construction cannot be undertaken. Our entire experience shows that this is a very serious matter, and we must therefore give prominence to Party primacy and never lose sight of it when discussing our activities and our organisational development. How this is to be done will still have to be discussed at length; it will have to be discussed in the Party's Central Committee and in the Council of People's Commissars. The decree which was endorsed yesterday laid down the fundamentals in respect of the Chief Committee for Political Education, but it has not yet gone through all the stages in the Council of People's Commissars. The decree will be published within the next few days, and you will see that its final form makes no direct mention of relations with the Party.

We must, however, know and remember that, in law and in

practice, the Constitution of the Soviet Republic is based on the tenet that the Party rectifies, prescribes and builds according to a single principle—to enable the communist elements linked with the proletariat to imbue the proletariat with their own spirit, win its adherence, and open its eyes to the bourgeois deceit which we have been trying so long to eliminate. The People's Commissariat of Education has gone through a long struggle; for a long time the teachers' organisation resisted the socialist revolution. Bourgeois prejudices have struck very deep root among the teachers. There has been a long struggle in the form of direct sabotage and of tenacious bourgeois prejudices, and we have to fight for the communist positions slowly, step by step and win them. The Chief Committee for Political Education, which is concerned with extra-mural education, the work of educating and enlightening the masses, is faced with the clear task of combining Party leadership with the effort to gain the adherence of, to imbue with its spirit and to animate with its initiative, this half-million strong army of teachers, this vast institution which is now in the service of the workers. Education workers—the teachers—were trained in the spirit of bourgeois prejudices and habits, in a spirit hostile to the proletariat, with which they have had no ties whatever. We must now train a new army of teachers and instructors who must be in close touch with the Party and its ideas, be imbued with its spirit, and attract the masses of workers, instilling the spirit of communism into them and arousing their interest in what is being done by the Communists.

Since the old customs, habits and ideas must be discarded, the Chief Committee for Political Education and its personnel are faced with a most important task, which they must keep uppermost in their minds. Here we indeed have a dilemma: how can we establish a link between the teachers, most of whom are of the old school, with Party members, with the Communists? That is an extremely difficult problem, one that will require a considerable amount of thought.

Let us consider the means of establishing organisational links between people who are so different. In principle, we cannot for a moment doubt the need of the Communist Party's primacy. Consequently, the purpose of political culture, of political instruction, is to train genuine Communists capable of stamping out falsehood and prejudices and helping the working masses to vanquish the old system and build up a state without capitalists, without exploiters, and without landowners. How can that be done? Only by acquiring the sum total of knowledge that the teachers have inherited from the bourgeoisie. Without this the technical achievements of communism will be impossible, and all hopes for those achievements would be pipe dreams. So the ques-

tion arises: how are we to organise these people, who are not used to bringing politics into their work, especially the politics that is to our advantage, i.e., politics essential to communism? That, as I have said, is a very difficult problem. We have discussed the matter in the Central Committee, and in discussing it have tried to take into account the lessons of experience. We think that a congress like the one I am addressing today, a conference like yours, will be of great value in this respect. Every Party Committee now has to look from a new angle upon every propagandist, who used to be regarded merely as a man belonging to a definite circle, a definite organisation. Each of them belongs to a ruling party which directs the whole state, and the Soviet Russia's world struggle against the bourgeois system. He is a representative of a fighting class and of a party which runs, and must run, an enormous machine of state. Many a Communist who has been through the splendid school of underground work and has been tested and steeled in the struggle is unwilling or unable to understand the full significance of this change, of this transition, which turns the agitator and propagandist into a leader of agitators, a leader in a huge political organisation. The kind of title he is given, even if it is an embarrassing one—such as superintendent of general schools—does not matter much; what is important is that he should be capable of directing the mass of teachers.

It should be said that the hundreds of thousands of teachers constitute a body that must get the work moving, stimulate thought, and combat the prejudices that to this day still persist among the masses. The heritage of capitalist culture, the fact that the mass of the teachers are imbued with its defects, which prevent them from being Communists, should not deter us from admitting these teachers into the ranks of the political education workers, for these teachers possess the knowledge without which we cannot achieve our aim.

We must put hundreds of thousands of useful people to work in the service of communist education. That is a task that was accomplished at the front, in our Red Army, into which tens of thousands of representatives of the old army were incorporated. In the lengthy process of re-education, they became welded with the Red Army, as they ultimately proved by their victories. This is an example that we must follow in our cultural and educational work. True, this work is not so spectacular, but it is even more important. We need every agitator and propagandist; he will be doing his job if he works in a strictly Party spirit but at the same time does not limit himself to Party work, and remembers that it is his duty to direct hundreds of thousands of teachers, whet their interest, overcome their old bourgeois prej-

udices, enlist them in the work we are doing, and make them realise the immensity of our work. It is only by tackling that job that we can lead this mass of people, whom capitalism suppressed and drew away from us, along the right path.

Such are the aims that every agitator and propagandist working in the sphere of extra-mural education must pursue and constantly keep in sight. A host of practical difficulties will be encountered in the process, and you must help the cause of communism by becoming representatives and leaders, not only of Party study-circles, but of the entire state administration, which is now in the hands of the working class.

We must overcome resistance from the capitalists in all its forms, not only in the military and the political spheres, but also ideological resistance, which is the most deep-seated and the strongest. It is the duty of our educational workers to accomplish the re-education of the masses. The interest, the thirst for education and knowledge of communism which are to be seen among them are a guarantee of our victory in this field too, although, perhaps, not as rapid as at the front and only after great difficulties and at times even reverses. However, we shall ultimately win.

Last, I should like to dwell on one more point. Perhaps the title of Chief Committee for Political Education is not properly understood. Inasmuch as it makes mention of the political concept, politics is the main thing here.

But how is politics to be understood? If politics is understood in the old sense, one may fall into a grave and profound error. Politics means a struggle between classes; means the relations of the proletariat in its struggle for its emancipation, against the world bourgeoisie. However, in our struggle two aspects of the matter stand out: on the one hand, there is the task of destroying the heritage of the bourgeois system, of foiling the repeated attempts of the whole bourgeoisie to crush the Soviet state. This task has absorbed most of our attention hitherto and has prevented us from proceeding to the other task, that of construction. According to the bourgeois world outlook, politics was divorced, as it were, from economics. The bourgeoisie said: peasants, you must work for your livelihood; workers, you must work to secure your means of subsistence on the market; as for economic policy, that is the business of your masters. That, however, is not so; politics should be the business of the people, the business of the proletariat. Here we must emphasise the fact that nine-tenths of our time and our work is devoted to the struggle against the bourgeoisie. The victories over Wrangel, of which we read yesterday, and of which you will read today and probably tomorrow, show that one stage of the struggle is coming to an

end and that we have secured peace with a number of Western countries; every victory on the war front leaves our hands freer for the internal struggle, for the politics of state organisation. Every step that brings us closer to victory over the whiteguards gradually shifts the focus of the struggle to economic policy. Propaganda of the old type describes and illustrates what communism is. This kind of propaganda is now useless, for we have to show in practice how socialism is to be built. All our propaganda must be based on the political experience of economic development. That is our principal task; whoever interprets it in the old sense will show himself to be a retrograde, one who is incapable of conducting propaganda work among the masses of the peasants and workers. Our main policy must now be to develop the state economically, so as to gather in more poods of grain and mine more poods of coal, to decide how best to utilise these poods of grain and coal and preclude starvation—that is our policy. All our agitation and propaganda must be focussed on this aim. There must be less fine talk, for you cannot satisfy the working people with fine words. As soon as the war enables us to shift the focus from the struggle against the bourgeoisie, from the struggle against Wrangel and the whiteguards, we shall turn to economic policy. And then agitation and propaganda will play a role of tremendous and ever-growing importance.

Every agitator must be a state leader, a leader of all the peasants and workers in the work of economic development. He must tell them what one should know, what pamphlets and books one should read to become a Communist. That is the way to improve our economic life and make it more secure, more social; that is the way to increase production, improve the food situation and distribution of the goods produced, increase coal output, and restore industry without capitalism and without the capitalist spirit.

What does communism consist in? All propaganda for communism must be conducted in a way that will amount to practical guidance of the state's development. Communism must be made comprehensible to the masses of the workers so that they will regard it as their own cause. That task is being poorly accomplished, and thousands of mistakes are being made. We make no secret of the fact. However, the workers and the peasants must themselves build up and improve our apparatus, with our assistance, feeble and inadequate as it is. To us, that is no longer a programme, a theory, or a task to be accomplished; it has become a matter of actual and practical development. Although we suffered some cruel reverses in our war, we have at least learnt from these reverses and won complete victory. Now, too, we must learn a lesson from every defeat and must remember that the workers and peasants have to be instructed by taking the work

already performed as an example. We must point out what is bad, so as to avoid it in future.

By taking constructive work as an example, by repeating it time and again, we shall succeed in turning inefficient communist managers into genuine builders, and, in the first place, into builders of our economic life. We shall achieve our targets and overcome all the obstacles which we have inherited from the old system and cannot be eliminated at a single stroke. We must re-educate the masses; they can be re-educated only by agitation and propaganda. The masses must be brought, in the first place, into the work of building the entire economic life. That must be the principal and basic object in the work of each agitator and propagandist, and when he realises this, the success of his work will be assured. (*Loud applause.*)

*Bulletin of the All-Russia Conference of  
Political Education Workers  
(November 1-8, 1920), Moscow*

*Collected Works, Vol. 31,  
pp. 363-73*

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## DRAFT RESOLUTION ON "THE TASKS OF THE TRADE UNIONS, AND THE METHODS OF THEIR ACCOMPLISHMENT"<sup>185</sup>

In accordance with the decisions of the Ninth Congress of the Communist Party of Russia, the Conference once again draws the attention of the trade unions to the necessity of these decisions being scrupulously fulfilled, and points out in particular that the imperative need of a single economic plan establishing the order of priority of objectives in the general scheme of economic construction is indisputable. At the same time, as was recognised by the Party Conference of September 1920, a gradual but steady transition must be effected from urgency procedures to a more even distribution of forces, particularly in the secondment of the individual unions' best organisers to the All-Russia Central Council of Trade Unions with a view to consolidating that body as a whole, improving the functioning of its apparatus, achieving greater system in the work of all trade unions, and thereby strengthening the entire trade union movement.

This measure should be applied in particular to the Central Committee of the General Transport Workers' Union (*Isektran*)<sup>186</sup>; an end must be put to its disproportionate growth as compared with the other unions, and the best elements thus released should extend to the entire trade union movement those methods of the broader application of democracy, the promotion of initiative, participation in the management of industry, the development of emulation, and so forth, which have yielded the best practical results.

In conformity with the decisions of the Ninth Congress of the Communist Party of Russia, and recognising as absolutely indispensable the development, extension and consolidation of trade union participation in production management, the Conference instructs the All-Russia Central Council of Trade Unions to sum up immediately the practical experience gained in this respect by the leading unions and enterprises, and to draw up detailed in-



structions, which will help all trade unions make use of that practical experience and will enjoin them to utilise the latter in a more energetic and systematic fashion.

This refers especially to the utilisation of specialists.

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# **EIGHTH ALL-RUSSIA CONGRESS OF SOVIETS**

**DECEMBER 22-29, 1920**

## **1**

### **REPORT OF THE ALL-RUSSIA CENTRAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE AND THE COUNCIL OF PEOPLE'S COMMISSARS ON THE HOME AND FOREIGN POLICY DECEMBER 22**

*(Shouts from the hall: "Long live Comrade Lenin!" Storm of applause. An ovation.)* Comrades, I have to present a report on the home and foreign policy of the government. I do not think it is the purpose of my report to give you a list of at least the most outstanding or most important laws and measures adopted by the workers' and peasants' government. Nor do I think that you would be interested in an account of the events of this period, or that it is very important that I should give one. As I see it, general conclusions should be drawn from the principal lessons we have learnt during this year, which was no less abundant in abrupt political changes than the preceding years of the revolution were. From the general lessons of this year's experience we must deduce the most urgent political and economic tasks that face us, tasks to which the Soviet government—both through the legislative acts which are being submitted for your examination and endorsement and through the sum total of its measures—at present attaches the greatest hopes and significance, and from the fulfilment of which it expects important progress in our economic development. Permit me, therefore, to confine myself to brief comments on the Republic's international situation and on the chief results of our foreign policy during the past year.

You all know, of course, how the Polish landowners and capitalists forced a war on us under the pressure and at the insistence of the capitalist countries of Western Europe, and not of Western Europe alone. You know that in April of this year we made peace proposals to the Polish Government, on terms which were incomparably more advantageous to it than the present terms, and that it was only under pressure of dire necessity, after our negotiations for an armistice with Poland had ended in a complete break-down, that we were obliged to fight. Despite the heavy defeat our forces suffered near Warsaw, as a result of

their undoubted exhaustion, this war has ended in a peace that is far more favourable to us than the one we proposed to Poland in April. A preliminary treaty with Poland has been signed, and negotiations are now under way for the conclusion of a final peace treaty.<sup>187</sup> We certainly do not conceal from ourselves the danger presented by the pressure being exerted by some of the more stubborn capitalist countries and by certain Russian whiteguard circles with the aim of preventing these negotiations from ending in a peace. It should, however, be said that the Entente's policy, which aims at military intervention and the armed suppression of the Soviets, is steadily coming to nought, and that we are winning over to our policy of peace a steadily increasing number of states which are undoubtedly hostile towards the Soviets. The number of countries that have signed peace treaties is increasing, and there is every probability that a final peace treaty with Poland will be signed in the immediate future. Thus, another severe blow will be struck at the alliance of the capitalist forces which are trying to wrench the power of government from us by means of war.

Comrades, you also know, of course, that the temporary setbacks we suffered in the war with Poland and the difficulty of our position at certain moments of the war were due to our being obliged to fight Wrangel, who was officially recognised by one imperialist power,<sup>188</sup> and received vast material, military and other aid. To end the war as quickly as possible, we had to effect a rapid concentration of troops so as to strike a decisive blow at Wrangel. You, of course, know what dauntless heroism was displayed by the Red Army in surmounting obstacles and fortifications which even military experts and military authorities considered impregnable. The complete, decisive and remarkably swift victory the Red Army gained over Wrangel is one of the most brilliant pages in its history. That was how the war forced on us by the whiteguards and the imperialists ended.

It is with far greater assurance and determination that we can now set about a task that is dear to us, an essential task, one that has long been attracting us—that of economic development. We can do so with the assurance that the capitalist tycoons will not find it as easy to frustrate this work as in the past. Of course, we must be on our guard. In no case can we say that we are already guaranteed against war. It is not because of the absence of formal peace treaties that we are still without that guarantee. We are very well aware that the remnants of Wrangel's army have not been destroyed, that they are lying low close at hand, that they are under ward and tutelage, and are being re-formed with the aid of the capitalist powers. We know that the whiteguard Russian organisations are working actively to re-create certain military units and, together with Wrangel's

forces, to prepare them for a new onslaught on Russia at a favourable moment.

That is why we must maintain our military preparedness under all circumstances. Irrespective of the blows already struck at imperialism, we must keep our Red Army in a state of combat readiness at all costs, and increase its fighting efficiency. The release of a certain section of the army and its rapid demobilisation does not, of course, militate against this. We rely on the tremendous experience gained by the Red Army and its leaders during the war to enable us now to improve its quality. And we shall see to it that although the army is reduced we shall retain a cadre whose maintenance will not entail an undue burden on the Republic, while at the same time, with the reduction in the number of effectives, we shall be in a better position than before, in case of need, to mobilise and equip a still larger military force.

We are certain that all the neighbouring states, which have already lost a great deal by supporting the whiteguard conspiracies against us, have learnt the hard lesson of experience and have duly appreciated our conciliatory spirit, which was generally considered as weakness on our part. Three years of experience have no doubt shown them that, while we are persistently striving for peace, we are prepared from the military point of view. Any attempt to start a war against us will mean, to the states involved, that the terms they will get following such a war will be worse than those they could have obtained without a war or prior to it. This has been proved in respect of several countries. This is an achievement we shall not forego, one that will not be forgotten by any of the powers surrounding us or in political contact with Russia. Thanks to this, our relations with neighbouring countries are steadily improving. You know that a final peace has been signed with a number of states bordering on the Western frontiers of Russia. These were part of the former Russian Empire, and the Soviet government has unequivocally recognised their independence and sovereignty, in conformity with the fundamental principles of our policy.<sup>189</sup> Peace on such a basis has every chance of being far more durable than is to the liking of the capitalists and certain West-European states.

As regards the Latvian Government, I must say that at one time there was a danger of our relations becoming strained, so much so that the idea even arose of severing diplomatic relations. But the latest report from our representative in Latvia indicates that a change of policy has already taken place, and that many misunderstandings and legitimate causes of dissatisfaction have been removed. There is good reason to hope that in the near future we shall have close economic ties with Latvia, which will naturally be even more useful to us in our trade with Western

Europe than Estonia and the other states bordering on the R.S.F.S.R.

I must also say, comrades, that during this year our policy in the East has been very successful. We must welcome the formation and consolidation of the Soviet Republics of Bokhara, Azerbaijan and Armenia, which have not only recovered their complete independence, but have placed the power of government in the hands of the workers and peasants. These republics are proof and corroboration of the fact that the ideas and principles of Soviet government are understood and immediately applicable, not only in the industrially developed countries, not only in those which have a social basis like the proletariat, but also in those which have the peasantry as their basis. The idea of peasants' Soviets has triumphed. The peasants' power has been assured: they own the land and the means of production. The friendly relations between the peasant Soviet Republics and the Russian Socialist Republic have already been consolidated by the practical results of our policy.

We can also welcome the forthcoming signing of a treaty with Persia, friendly relations with whom are assured by the fact that the fundamental interests of all peoples suffering from the yoke of imperialism<sup>190</sup> coincide.

We must also note that friendly relations with Afghanistan, and still more so with Turkey, are being steadily established and strengthened. As for the latter power, the Entente countries have done everything they could to render impossible any more or less normal relations between her and the West-European countries. This circumstance, coupled with consolidation of the Soviets, is steadily strengthening the alliance and the friendly relations between Russia and the oppressed nations of the East, despite the bourgeoisie's resistance and intrigues and the continuing encirclement of Russia by bourgeois countries. The chief factor in politics today is the violence being used by the imperialists against peoples which have not had the good fortune to be among the victors; this world policy of imperialism is leading to closer relations, alliance and friendship among all the oppressed nations. The success we have achieved in this respect in the West as well, in relation to more Europeanised states, goes to show that the present principles of our foreign policy are correct and that the improvement in our international position rests on a firm basis. We are confident that, by continuing our peace policy and by making concessions (and we must do so if we wish to avoid war), the basic line of our policy and the fundamental interests which stem from the very nature of imperialist policy will come into their own and will make it more and more imperative for the R.S.F.S.R. to establish closer relations with a grow-

ing number of neighbouring states, despite the intrigues and machinations of the imperialists, who, of course, are always capable of provoking a quarrel between us and some other state. Such relations are our guarantee that we shall be able to devote ourselves whole-heartedly to economic development and that we shall be able, for a longer period, to work calmly, steadfastly and confidently.

I must add that negotiations for the conclusion of a trade agreement with Great Britain are now under way. Unfortunately, these negotiations have been dragging out much longer than we would wish, but we are not at all to blame for that. When, as far back as July—at the moment the Soviet troops were achieving their greatest successes—the British Government officially submitted to us the text of an agreement assuring the establishment of trade relations, we replied by giving our full consent, but since then the conflict of the various trends within the British Government and the British state has held this up. We see how the British Government is vacillating, and is threatening to sever relations with us and immediately to dispatch warships to Petrograd. We have seen all this, but at the same time we have seen that, in reply to this threat, Councils of Action<sup>191</sup> have sprung up all over Great Britain. We have seen how, under pressure from the workers, the most extreme adherents of the opportunist trend and their leaders have been obliged to resort to this quite “un-constitutional” policy, one that they had themselves condemned a short while before. It appears that, despite the Menshevik prejudices which have hitherto prevailed in the British trade union movement, the pressure brought to bear by the working people and their political consciousness have become strong enough to blunt the edge of the imperialists’ bellicose policy. Continuing our policy of peace, we have taken our stand on the proposals made by the British Government in July. We are prepared to sign a trade agreement at once; if it has not yet been signed, the blame rests wholly with those trends and tendencies in British ruling circles that are anxious to frustrate the trade agreement and, against the will of the majority, not only of the workers but even of the British bourgeoisie, want a free hand to attack Soviet Russia again. That is their affair.

The longer this policy is pursued by certain influential circles in Great Britain, by financial and imperialist circles there, the more it will aggravate the financial situation, the longer it will delay the semi-agreement which has now become essential between bourgeois Britain and the Soviet Republic, and the nearer it will bring the imperialists to a situation that will oblige them to accept a full agreement, not merely a semi-agreement.

Comrades, I must say that this trade agreement with Great

Britain is connected with one of the most important questions in our economic policy, that of concessions. One of the important acts passed by the Soviet government during the period under review is the law on concessions of November 23, this year. You are, of course, all familiar with the text of this law. You all know that we have now published additional material, from which delegates to the Congress of Soviets can obtain full information on this question. We have published a special pamphlet<sup>192</sup> containing, not only the text of the decree but also a list of the chief concessions we are offering: agricultural, timber and mining. We have taken steps to make the published text of this decree available in the West-European countries as early as possible, and we hope that our concessions policy will also be a practical success. We do not in the least close our eyes to the dangers this policy presents to the Socialist Soviet Republic, a country that, moreover, is weak and backward. While our Soviet Republic remains the isolated borderland of the capitalist world, it would be absolutely ridiculous, fantastic and utopian to hope that we can achieve complete economic independence and that all dangers will vanish. Of course, as long as the radical contrasts remain, the dangers will also remain, and there is no escaping them. What we have to do is to get firmly on our feet in order to survive these dangers; we must be able to distinguish between big dangers and little dangers, and incur the lesser dangers rather than the greater.

We were recently informed that, at a Congress of Soviets of Arzamas Uyezd in Nizhni-Novgorod Gubernia, a peasant, not a member of the Party, said on the subject of concessions: "Comrades, we are delegating you to the All-Russia Congress and declare that we peasants are prepared to endure hunger and cold and do our duty for another three years, but don't sell Mother Russia in the form of concessions." I heartily welcome such sentiments, which are very widespread. I think it is highly indicative that during these three years the masses of non-Party working people—not only industrial workers but peasants as well—have acquired the political and economic experience which enables and compels them to value their liberation from the capitalists above all else, which compels them to exercise redoubled caution and to treat with extreme suspicion every step that involves the possibility of new dangers of the restoration of capitalism. Of course, we give the greatest consideration to all declarations of this kind, but we must say that there is no question of selling out Russia to the capitalists. It is a question of concessions; any concessions agreement is limited to a definite period and by definite terms. It is hedged around with all possible guarantees, by guarantees that have been carefully considered and

will be considered and discussed with you again and again, at the present Congress and at various other conferences. These temporary agreements have nothing to do with any selling out. There is not a hint in them of selling Russia. What they do represent is a certain economic concession to the capitalists, the purpose of which is to enable us, as soon as possible, to secure the necessary machinery and locomotives without which we cannot effect the restoration of our economy. We have no right to neglect anything that may, in however small a measure, help us to improve the conditions of the workers and peasants.

We must do all we possibly can to bring about the rapid restoration of trade relations, and negotiations are at present being carried on in a semi-legal framework. We are ordering locomotives and machines in far from adequate numbers, but we have begun to order them. When we conduct these negotiations officially, the possibilities will be vastly expanded. With the aid of industry we shall achieve a great deal, and in a shorter period; but even if the achievements are very great, the period will cover years, a number of years. It must be borne in mind that although we have now gained a military victory and have secured peace, history teaches us that no big question has ever been settled, and no revolution accomplished, without a series of wars. And we shall not forget this lesson. We have already taught a number of powerful countries not to wage war on us, but we cannot guarantee that this will be for long. The imperialist predators will attack us again if there is the slightest change in the situation. We must be prepared for it. Hence, the first thing is to restore the economy and place it firmly on its feet. Without equipment, without machinery obtained from capitalist countries, we cannot do this rapidly. And we should not grudge the capitalist a little extra profit if only we can effect this restoration. The workers and peasants must share the sentiments of those non-Party peasants who have declared that they are not afraid to face sacrifice and privation. Realising the danger of capitalist intervention, they do not regard concessions from a sentimental point of view, but as a continuation of the war, as the transfer of the ruthless struggle to another plane, they see in them the possibility of fresh attempts on the part of the bourgeoisie to restore the old capitalism. That is splendid; it is a guarantee that not only the organs of Soviet power but all the workers and peasants will make it their business to keep watch and ward over our interests. We are, therefore, confident that we shall be able to place the protection of our interests on such a basis that the restoration of the power of the capitalists will be totally out of the question even in carrying out the concessions agreements; we shall do everything to reduce the danger to a minimum, and make it less than



the danger of war, so that it will be difficult to resume the war and easier for us to restore and develop our economy in a shorter period, in fewer years (and it is a matter of a good many years).

Comrades, economic tasks, the economic front, are again and again assuming prominence as the chief and fundamental factor. While studying the texts of the various laws on which I have to report to you, I saw that the vast majority of the measures and decisions of the Council of People's Commissars and the Council of Defence<sup>193</sup> consist at present of specific, detailed and frequently minute measures connected with this economic activity. You, of course, do not expect me to give you a list of these measures. It would be extremely tedious and quite uninteresting. I should only like to remind you that this is by no means the first time that we are attaching primary importance to the labour front. Let us recall the resolution passed by the All-Russia Central Executive Committee on April 29, 1918.\* That was a time when Russia was economically dismembered by the Peace of Brest-Litovsk that was forced upon us, and when this extremely rapacious treaty had placed us in an extremely difficult position. It then appeared possible to count on a respite which would create conditions for the restoration of peaceful economic activities, and—although we now know that this respite was a very brief one—the All-Russia Central Executive Committee, in its resolution of April 29, at once focussed all attention on economic development. This resolution, which has not been rescinded and remains one of our laws, provides a proper perspective, enabling us to judge how we approached this task and to what we must now devote greater attention in the interests of our work and in order to complete it successfully.

An examination of this resolution clearly shows that many of the problems we now have to tackle were presented in a clear-cut, firm and sufficiently decisive way as far back as April 1918. Remembering this, we say that repetition is the mother of learning. We are not dismayed by our having to repeat the basic axioms of economic development. We shall repeat them time and again, but see what a difference there is between the declaration of abstract principles in 1918 and the practical economic work that has already been begun. Despite the tremendous difficulties and the constant interruptions in our work, we are approaching closer and closer to a concrete and practical solution of our economic problems. We shall repeat things over and over again. In constructive work you cannot avoid a vast number of repetitions, or avoid turning back every now and again, testing what you have done, making certain corrections, adopting new methods,

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See present edition, Vol. 2, pp. 620-22 —*Ed.*

and bending every effort to convince the backward and the untrained.

The essential feature of the present political situation is that we are now passing through a crucial period of transition, something of a zigzag transition from war to economic development. This has occurred before, but not on such a wide scale. This should constantly remind us of what the general political tasks of the Soviet government are, and what constitutes the particular feature of this transition. The dictatorship of the proletariat has been successful because it has been able to combine compulsion with persuasion. The dictatorship of the proletariat does not fear any resort to compulsion and to the most severe, decisive and ruthless forms of coercion by the state. The advanced class, the class most oppressed by capitalism, is entitled to use compulsion, because it is doing so in the interests of the working and exploited people, and because it possesses means of compulsion and persuasion such as no former classes ever possessed, although they had incomparably greater material facilities for propaganda and agitation than we have.

If we ask ourselves what the results of our experience in these three years have been (for it is difficult, on certain fundamental points, to sum up the results of a single year), if we ask ourselves how, after all, our victory over an enemy much stronger than ourselves is to be explained, it must be said that it was because the organisation of the Red Army splendidly embodied the consistency and firmness of proletarian leadership in the alliance of the workers and the working peasantry against all exploiters. What was the reason? Why did the vast masses of the peasantry willingly consent to this? Because they were convinced, though their vast majority were not Party members, that there was no way of salvation except by supporting the Soviet government. It was, of course, not books that convinced them of this, nor was it propaganda. It was all through experience. They were convinced by the experience of the Civil War, in particular by the alliance between our Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries, which is more closely akin to certain fundamental features of small-scale peasant economy. Their experience of the alliance between these parties of the small property-owners and the land-owners and the capitalists, and their experience of Kolchak and Denikin, convinced the peasant masses that no middle course was possible, that the plain and straightforward Soviet policy was the right one, and that the iron leadership of the proletariat was their only means of salvation from exploitation and violence. It has been only because of our ability to convince the peasants of this that our policy of coercion, which is based on this firm and absolute conviction, has met with such tremendous success.

We must now bear in mind that, in going over to the labour front, we are faced with the same problem, under new conditions and on a much wider scale, that confronted us when we were fighting the whiteguards and witnessed a degree of enthusiasm and concentration of energy on the part of the worker and peasant masses such as has never been, and never could have been, displayed in any war in any other state. From their own observations and their knowledge of life, the non-Party peasants, like the Arzamas peasant whose words I have just quoted, did really come to the conclusion that the exploiters are ruthless enemies and that a ruthless state power is required to crush them. We succeeded in rousing unprecedented numbers of people to display an intelligent attitude towards the war, and to support it actively. Never before, under any political regime, has there been even one-tenth of the sympathy with a war and an understanding of it as that unanimously displayed by our Party and non-Party workers and non-Party peasants (and the mass of the peasants are non-Party) under Soviet power. That is the main reason for our having ultimately defeated a powerful enemy. That is corroboration of one of the most profound and at the same time most simple and comprehensible precepts of Marxism. The greater the scope and extent of historical events, the greater is the number of people participating in them, and, contrariwise, the more profound the change we wish to bring about, the more must we rouse an interest and an intelligent attitude towards it, and convince more millions and tens of millions of people that it is necessary. In the final analysis, the reason our revolution has left all other revolutions far behind is that, through the Soviet form of government, it has aroused tens of millions of people, formerly uninterested in state development, to take an active part in the work of building up the state. Let us now consider, from this aspect, the new tasks which confronted us and were expressed in tens and hundreds of decisions passed by the Soviet government during this period; they accounted for nine-tenths of the work of the Council of Labour and Defence (we shall speak of this later), and probably more than half of the work of the Council of People's Commissars, namely, the economic tasks, the elaboration of a single economic plan, the reorganisation of the very foundations of the economy of Russia, the very foundations of small-scale peasant economy. These tasks require that all members of trade unions, without exception, should be drawn into this absolutely new work, something that was alien to them under capitalism. Now ask yourselves whether we at present have the condition for the rapid and unequivocal success that we had during the war, the condition of the masses being drawn into the work. Are the members

of the trade unions and the majority of the non-Party people convinced that our new methods and our great tasks of economic development are necessary? Are they as convinced of this as they were of the necessity of devoting everything to the war, of sacrificing everything for the sake of victory on the war front? If the question is presented in that way, you will be compelled to answer that they are certainly not. They are far from being as fully convinced of this as they should be.

War was a matter which people understood and were used to for hundreds and thousands of years. The acts of violence and brutality formerly committed by the landowners were so obvious that it was easy to convince the people; it was not difficult to convince even the peasants of the richer grain regions, who are least connected with industry, that we were waging war in the interests of the working people, and it was therefore possible to arouse almost universal enthusiasm. It will be more difficult to get the peasant masses and the members of the trade unions to understand these tasks now, to get them to understand that we cannot go on living in the old way, that however firmly capitalist exploitation has been implanted in the course of decades, it must be overcome. We must get everybody to understand that Russia belongs to us, and that only we, the masses of workers and peasants, can by our activities and our strict labour discipline remould the old economic conditions of existence and put a great economic plan into practice. There can be no salvation apart from this. We are lagging behind the capitalist powers and shall continue to lag behind them; we shall be defeated if we do not succeed in restoring our economy. That is why we must repeat the old truths I have just reminded you of, the old truths regarding the importance of organisational problems, of labour discipline, regarding the immense role of the trade unions—an absolutely exclusive role in this sphere, because there is no other organisation which unites the broad masses; that is why we must not only repeat these old truths, but must with every fibre of our being realise that the transition from military tasks to economic tasks has begun.

We have been completely successful in the military sphere, and we must now prepare to achieve similar successes in tasks which are more difficult and which demand enthusiasm and self-sacrifice from the vast majority of workers and peasants. The conviction that the new tasks are necessary must be instilled in hundreds of millions of people who from generation to generation have lived in a state of slavery and oppression and whose every initiative has been suppressed. We must convince the millions of workers who belong to trade unions but who are still not politically conscious and are unaccustomed to regarding

themselves as masters. They must be organised, not to resist the government but to support and develop the measures of their workers' government and to carry them out to the full. This transition will be accompanied by difficulties. Regarded merely as a formulation, it is not a new task; it is a new task insofar as the economic problem is being raised on such a vast scale for the first time; we must realise and remember that the war on the economic front will be more difficult and prolonged. To achieve success on this front, a larger number of workers and peasants must be educated to be self-reliant, active and devoted. This can be done, as is borne out by the experience we have gained in economic development, because the masses fully realise that the misfortunes, cold, hunger and privation have been caused by the inadequacy of our productive forces. We must now transfer all our agitation and propaganda from political and military interests to economic development. We have proclaimed this many times, but insufficiently; it seems to me that the most outstanding measures adopted by the Soviet government during the past year are the creation of the Central Bureau for Production Propaganda of the All-Russia Central Council of Trade Unions, the amalgamation of its work with that of the Chief Committee for Political Education, and the publication of additional newspapers for the respective industries, which are to devote attention, not only to production propaganda but also to its organisation on a country-wide scale.

The necessity of organising production propaganda on a nationwide scale follows from the special features of the political situation. It is equally necessary to the working class, the trade unions, and the peasantry. It is absolutely essential to our state apparatus, which we have used far from enough for this purpose. We have a thousand times more knowledge, book knowledge, of how to run industry and how to interest the masses than is being applied in practice. We must see to it that literally every member of the trade unions becomes interested in production, and remembers that only by increasing production and raising labour productivity will Soviet Russia be in a state to win. Only in this way will Soviet Russia be able to shorten by about ten years the period of the frightful conditions she is now experiencing, the hunger and cold she is now suffering. If we do not understand this task, we may all perish, because we shall have to retreat owing to the weakness of our apparatus, since, after a short respite, the capitalists may at any moment renew the war, while we shall not be in a state to continue it. We shall not be able to bring the pressure of the millions of our masses to bear, and in this last war we shall be smashed. That is how the matter stands. Hitherto, the fate of all revolutions, of all great revolutions, has been decided by a long series of wars. Our

revolution too is such a great revolution. We have passed through one period of wars, and we must prepare for another. We do not know when it will come, but we must see to it that when it does come we shall be prepared for all contingencies. That is why we must not give up measures of compulsion, and not merely because we are preserving the dictatorship of the proletariat, which the mass of peasants and non-Party workers already understand. They know all about our dictatorship, and it holds out no terrors to them. It does not frighten them. They regard it as a bulwark and a stronghold, that is, something with which they can resist the land-owners and capitalists, and without which victory is impossible.

This realisation, this conviction, which has already become deep-rooted among the peasant masses as far as military and political tasks are concerned, must now be extended to economic problems. We may not, perhaps, succeed in bringing about this transition at once. It may, possibly, not be effected without certain vacillations and reversions to the old flabbiness and petty-bourgeois ideology. We must tackle this work with still greater energy and zeal, remembering that we can convince the non-Party peasants and insufficiently class-conscious trade union members, because the truth is on our side, and because it cannot be denied that in the second period of wars we shall not be able to defeat our enemies unless the country's economy is restored. Let us only see to it that the millions take a more enlightened attitude towards the war on the economic front. This is the task of the Central Bureau for Production Propaganda, the task of the All-Russia Central Council of Trade Unions, the task of all Party workers, the task of all the departments of the Soviet government, the task of all our propaganda, with the help of which we have secured successes of world-wide significance, because our propaganda throughout the world has always told the workers and peasants the truth, while all other propaganda tells them lies. We must now switch our propaganda over to something which is far more difficult and concerns the everyday work of the workers in the factory shop, no matter how difficult the conditions of this work may be, and no matter how strong the memories of the old capitalist system may be, which taught the workers and peasants to mistrust governments. We must convince both workers and peasants that, without a new combination of forces, new forms of state amalgamation, and the new forms associated with compulsion, we shall not cope with our difficulties, and we shall not escape the abyss of economic collapse on the brink of which we are standing—and we have already begun to cope with the situation.

Comrades, I shall now deal with certain facts of our economic policy and the economic problems which seem to me to be characteristic of the present political situation and of the transition

now confronting us. I must first mention our agrarian bill, the bill of the Council of People's Commissars for the consolidation and development of agricultural production and for assistance to peasant farms. This bill was published on December 14 of this year, and before that date the substance and principles of it were communicated to all local officials by wireless.<sup>194</sup>

Arrangements should at once be made to have this bill thoroughly discussed—in the light of local experience (on which it is actually based), and this is being done in the localities—by the Congress and also by the representatives of the local Executive Committees and the departments of the latter. I think that no comrade now doubts the necessity of specific and very energetic measures of assistance—not only in the form of encouragement but also in the form of compulsion—to improve our agricultural production.

Our country has been and still is a country of small peasants, and the transition to communism is far more difficult for us than it would be under any other conditions. To accomplish this transition, the peasants' participation in it must be ten times as much as in the war. The war could demand, and was bound to demand, part of the adult male population. However, our country, a land of peasants which is still in a state of exhaustion, has to mobilise the entire male and female population of workers and peasants without exception. It is not difficult to convince us Communists, workers in the Land Departments, that state labour conscription is necessary. In the discussion of the bill of December 14 which has been submitted for your consideration, I hope that on this point there will not be even a shadow of difference in principle. We must realise that there is another difficulty, that of convincing the non-Party peasants. The peasants are not socialists. To base our socialist plans on the assumption that they are would be building on sand; it would mean that we do not understand our tasks and that, during these three years, we have not learnt to adjust our programmes and carry out our new undertakings with due account of the poverty and often squalor that surround us. We must have a clear picture of the problems that face us. The first task is to unite the Communists working in the Land Departments, draw general conclusions from their experience, grasp what has been done in the localities, and embody it in the legislative acts which will be promulgated at the centre, by government departments, and by the All-Russia Congress of Soviets. We hope that we shall be able to do that. However, that is only the first step. The second step is to convince the non-Party peasants, yes, the non-Party peasants, because they form the majority and because what we are in a position to do can be done only by making this mass, which is in itself active and full of initiative, realise to a greater degree

(that the task must be tackled. Peasant farming cannot continue in the old way. While we were able to extricate ourselves from the first period of wars, we shall not extricate ourselves so easily from the second period, and must therefore pay special attention to this aspect.

Every non-Party peasant must be made to understand this undoubted truth, and we are sure that he will understand it. He has not lived through these last six painful and difficult years in vain. He is not like the pre-war muzhik. He has suffered severely, has done a lot of thinking, and has borne many political and economic hardships that have induced him to give up a good deal of their old habits. It seems to me that he already realises that he cannot live in the old way, that he must live in a different way. All our means of propaganda, all the resources of the state, all our educational facilities and all our Party resources and reserves must be devoted in full force to convincing the non-Party peasant. Only then will our agrarian bill—which I hope you will adopt unanimously, with necessary amendments and addenda, of course—be placed on a sound basis. Only when we convince the majority of the peasants and draw them into this work will this measure become just as firm as our policy is. That is because—as Comrade Kurayev has rightly said in an article based on the experience of the Tatar Republic—the working middle peasant and poor peasant are friends of the Soviet government, while the idlers are its enemies. That is the real truth, a truth in which there is nothing socialist, but which is so indisputable and obvious that any village assembly and any meeting of non-Party peasants will understand it, and it will become the conviction of the overwhelming majority of the working peasants.

Comrades, here is what I particularly want to bring home to you now that we have turned from the phase of war to economic development. In a country of small peasants, our chief and basic task is to be able to resort to state compulsion in order to raise the level of peasant farming, beginning with measures that are absolutely essential, urgent and fully intelligible and comprehensible to the peasant. We shall be able to achieve this only when we are able to convince more millions of people who are not yet ready for it. We must devote all our forces to this and see to it that the apparatus of compulsion, activated and reinforced, shall be adapted and developed for a new drive of persuasion. Another campaign in the war will then end in victory. We are now declaring war on the relics of inertness, ignorance and mistrust that prevail among the peasant masses. We shall achieve nothing by the old methods, but we shall achieve victory by the methods of propaganda, agitation and organised influence which we have learnt. We shall also see to it that,



besides decrees being adopted, institutions created and documents written—it is not enough to send orders flying all over the country—all the fields are sown better than before by the spring, and a definite improvement is achieved in small peasant farming. Let it be even the most elementary improvement—the more cautious we are the better—but it must be achieved at all costs and on a mass scale. If we correctly understand the task that faces us, and if we devote our whole attention to the non-Party peasant, and concentrate on this all the skill and experience we have gained during these three years, we shall succeed. And unless we succeed, unless we achieve a practical and massive improvement in small-scale peasant farming, there is no salvation for us. Unless this basis is created, no economic development will be possible and the most ambitious plans will be valueless. The comrades must remember this and must bring it home to the peasants. They must tell the non-Party peasants of Arzamas—and there are about ten or fifteen million of them—that we cannot go on starving and freezing endlessly, for then we shall be overthrown in the next period of wars. This is a state matter; it concerns the interests of our state. Whoever reveals the least weakness, the least slackness in this matter, is an out-and-out criminal towards the workers' and peasants' government; he is helping the landowner and the capitalist. And the landowner and the capitalist have their armies nearby, holding them in readiness to launch against us the instant they see us weakening. There is no way to strengthen ourselves otherwise than by building up our main bulwark—agriculture and urban industry. These cannot be improved except by convincing the non-Party peasant of the need to do so, by mobilising all our forces to help him, and by actually helping him in practice.

We admit that we are in debt to the peasant. We have had grain from him in return for paper money, and have taken it from him on credit. We must repay that debt, and we shall do so when we have restored our industry. To restore it we need a surplus of agricultural products. That is why the agrarian bill is important, not only because we must secure practical results, but also because around it, as on a focal point, are grouped hundreds of decisions and legislative measures of the Soviet government.

I now pass on to the question of how the basis for our industrial development is being created to enable us to begin restoring Russia's economic forces. In this connection I must first draw your attention—from among the mass of reports which you have received or will receive in the next few days from all the Commissariats—to a passage in the report of our Commis-

sariat of Food. In the next few days each Commissariat will present you with a profusion of figures and reports, which taken together are overwhelming in their abundance. We must extract from them what is most essential to success, however modest it may be, and what is fundamental for the realisation of our economic plan, for the restoration of our economy and our industry. One of these essentials is the state of our food procurements. In the booklet which has been distributed to you—the report of the Commissariat of Food<sup>195</sup> for three years—you will find a table from which I shall read only the totals, and even those in round figures, because reading figures, and particularly listening to figures, is a difficult matter. These are the figures showing the total procurements for each year. From August 1, 1916 to August 1, 1917, 320,000,000 poods were procured; 50,000,000 were procured in the following year, then 100,000,000 and then 200,000,000 poods. These figures—320, 50, 100 and 200—give you the basis of the economic history of Soviet government, of the work of the Soviet government in the economic field, the preparations for that foundation which, when laid down, will enable us to really start developing. The pre-revolutionary 320,000,000 poods is the approximate minimum without which development is impossible. In the first year of the revolution, with only 50,000,000 poods, there was starvation, cold and poverty. In the second year we had 100,000,000 poods; in the third year, 200,000,000 poods. The total has doubled with each year. According to figures I received yesterday from Svidersky, we had 155,000,000 poods on December 15. We are beginning to stand on our feet for the first time, but with the utmost efforts, with unparalleled difficulties, very often having to accomplish the task without any supplies from Siberia, the Caucasus and the South. At present, with a procurement of over 150,000,000 poods, we can say without any exaggeration that despite the tremendous difficulties, this task has been accomplished. We shall have a total of about 300,000,000 poods, perhaps more. Without such a supply, however, it will be impossible to restore the country's industry; it will be hopeless to expect the revival of the transport system and it will be impossible even to approach the great task of electrifying Russia. There can be no socialist country, no state with a workers' and peasants' government unless, by the joint efforts of the workers and peasants, it can accumulate a stock of food sufficient to guarantee the subsistence of the workers engaged in industry and to make it possible to send tens and hundreds of thousands of workers wherever the Soviet government deems it necessary. Without this there can be nothing but empty talk. Food stocks are the real basis of the economic system. In this we have

achieved a signal success. Having achieved this success and with such a reserve, we can set about restoring our economy. We know that these successes have been achieved at the cost of tremendous privation, hunger and lack of cattle fodder among the peasants, which may become still more acute. We know that the year of drought increased the hardships and privations of the peasants to an unparalleled extent. We therefore lay prime stress on the measures of assistance contained in the bill I have referred to. We regard stocks of food as a fund for the restoration of industry, as a fund for helping the peasants. Without such a fund the state power is nothing. Without such a fund socialist policy is but a pious wish.

We must remember that the production propaganda which we have firmly decided to launch will be supplemented with a different kind of persuasion, namely, bonuses in kind. The law on bonuses in kind has been one of the most important decrees and decisions of the Council of People's Commissars and the Council of Defence. We were not able to pass this law immediately. If you examine the matter, you will find that ever since April there has been a long chain of decisions and resolutions, and that this law was passed only when, as the result of strenuous efforts on the part of our transport system, we were able to accumulate a food reserve of 500,000 poods. Five hundred thousand poods is a very modest figure. The reports which you no doubt read in *Izvestia* yesterday show that out of these 500,000 poods 170,000 poods have already been expended. As you see the reserve is nothing to boast of, and is far from adequate; nevertheless, we have entered on a road along which we shall advance. It is proof that we are not relying on persuasion alone in the transition to new methods of work. It is not enough to tell the peasants and the workers to maintain the utmost labour discipline. We must also help them; we must reward those who, after suffering tremendous hardships, continue to display heroism on the labour front. We have already created a reserve fund, but it is being utilised in a way that is far from satisfactory. We in the Council of People's Commissars have numerous indications that in practice a bonus in kind often amounts simply to an increase in wages. A good deal still remains to be done in this respect. The work of conferences and of drafting supplementary schemes at the centre must be coupled with very important work of another kind, namely, on the spot and among the masses. When the state not only persuades, but also rewards good workers by creating better living conditions for them, that is something that is not hard to understand; one does not have to be a socialist to understand it, and here we are assured in advance of the sympathy of the non-Party masses of workers and

peasants. We have only to make this idea much more widely known and to organise this work in a more practical way in the localities.

Now with regard to fuel; you will find in Comrade Rykov's theses figures that show the improvement that has been achieved, not only in firewood, but also in oil supplies. Thanks to the great zeal displayed by the workers in the Azerbaijan Republic, the friendly relations we have established with them and the capable managers provided by the Supreme Council of the National Economy, the oil situation is now favourable, so that we are beginning to stand on our own feet in the matter of fuel as well. Coal deliveries from the Donets Basin are being increased from 25,000,000 poods to 50,000,000 poods per month, thanks to the work of the authorised commission which was sent there under the chairmanship of Comrade Trotsky. This commission has decided to send responsible and experienced men to the Donets Basin, and Comrade Pyatakof has now been sent there to take charge.

Thus, to achieve success, we have adopted certain measures with regard to fuel. The Donets Basin, one of the largest sources, is already under our control. In the minutes of the Council of People's Commissars and the Council of Defence, decisions may be found relating to the Donets Basin. These make reference to the dispatch of commissions invested with considerable powers and consisting of representatives of the central government and of local officials. We must stimulate work in the localities, and it appears to me that we can do so with the help of these commissions. You will see the results of the work of these commissions, which we shall continue to set up in the future. We must give a definite boost to fuel production, the principal branch of our industry.

I must say that, in the matter of fuel, the hydraulic method of extracting peat is a great achievement. Peat is a fuel we possess in very large quantities, but which we have been unable to utilise till now because of the deplorable working conditions. This new method will enable us to overcome the fuel shortage, which presents one of the greatest dangers on our economic front. We shall not be able to get out of this impasse for many years to come, if we stick to the old methods and do not restore our industry and transport. The members of our Peat Committee have helped two Russian engineers to perfect this new invention, with the result that the new method is on the verge of completion. We are thus on the eve of a great revolution, which will be an important aid to us economically. It must not be forgotten that we possess vast deposits of peat, which we cannot utilise because we cannot send people to do such back-breaking work. The capitalist system could send people to work under such harsh con-

ditions. In the capitalist state people were driven to work there by hunger, but in the socialist state we cannot consign people to such intolerable work, and nobody will go there voluntarily. The capitalist system did everything for the upper crust. It was not concerned with the lower classes.

We must introduce more machines everywhere, and resort to machine technology as widely as possible. The extraction of peat by the hydraulic method, which has been so successfully promoted by the Supreme Council of the National Economy, makes it possible to extract fuel in vast quantities and eliminates the need for skilled workers, since even unskilled workers can perform the work under this method. We have produced these machines; I would advise the delegates to see the cinema film on peat extraction which has been shown in Moscow and which can be demonstrated for the Congress delegates. It will give you a definite idea of one of the means for coping with the fuel shortage. We have made the machines required for the new method, but we have made them badly. If we send our people abroad, with the establishment of trade with foreign countries, with even the existing semi-legal trade relations, the machines designed by our inventors could be made properly there. The number of these machines and the success gained in this field by the Chief Peat Committee and the Supreme Council of the National Economy will serve as a measure of all our economic achievements. Unless we overcome the fuel shortage, it will be impossible to win on the economic front. Vital success in restoring the transport system will also depend on this.

Incidentally, you have already seen from the theses of Comrades Yemshanov and Trotsky that in this field we have a real plan worked out for a number of years. Order No. 1042 was designed for a period of five years<sup>196</sup>; in five years we can restore our transport and reduce the number of broken-down locomotives. I should like to stress as probably the most difficult problem the statement made in the ninth thesis, to the effect that this period has already been reduced.

When extensive plans appear, designed for a number of years, sceptics are frequently to be found who say: how can we plan for a number of years ahead? The best we can hope for is to do what is required at the moment. Comrades, we must be able to combine the two things; we cannot work without a long-term plan that envisages important achievements. The truth of this is borne out by the undoubted improvement in the work of the transport system. I draw your attention to the passage in the ninth thesis which says that the period for the restoration of transport was fixed at five years, but it has already been reduced because we are ahead of the schedule. The period is now being

fixed at three and a half years. That is the way to work in the other branches of economic activity too. The real and practical task of the Council of Labour and Defence is being steadily reduced to that. We must avail ourselves of the progress of science and practice, and must steadfastly strive to get the plan fulfilled in the localities ahead of schedule, so that the masses will see that the long period separating us from the complete restoration of industry can be reduced in practice. It depends on us. Let us improve our methods in every workshop, in every railway depot, in every sphere, and we shall shorten this period. It is already being reduced. Do not be afraid of long-term plans, for without them you cannot achieve an economic revival; let us devote all our energies in the localities to their fulfilment.

Economic plans must be carried out in accordance with a definite programme, and the increasing fulfilment of this programme must be noted and encouraged. The masses must not only realise, but also feel that the shortening of the period of hunger, cold and poverty depends entirely upon how quickly they fulfil our economic plans. The plans of the various branches of production must be soundly co-ordinated, and linked up so as to constitute the single economic plan we stand in such great need of.

In this connection, we are confronted with the task of unifying the People's Commissariats for the various branches of the economy under a single economic centre. We have begun to tackle this task and we are submitting for your consideration a decision of the Council of People's Commissars and the Council of Labour and Defence regarding the reorganisation of the latter body.

You will examine this project, and I trust that with the necessary amendments it will be adopted unanimously. Its contents are very modest but its significance is great, because we need a body which definitely knows what its position is and unites all economic work; it is on economic work that the chief stress is now being laid.

This has been dealt with in the literature which appeared before and in connection with the Congress, in a pamphlet by Comradé Gusev, which, incidentally, is not as well written as his earlier one<sup>197</sup>. The pamphlet contains a sweeping plan for the organisation of the Council of Labour and Defence, to which it is proposed to transfer many prominent workers, among whom we find the names of Trotsky and Rykov. I would say that we need somewhat fewer flights of fancy like this. We cannot burst out of an apparatus which it has taken three years to build up. We realise its immense shortcomings, of which we shall speak in detail at this Congress. This question has been placed on the agenda; it is one of the most important questions. I am

*referring to the question of improving the Soviet apparatus. But we must at present act with circumspection, confine ourselves to what is essential, and change our apparatus on the basis of practical experience. Comrade Gusev has derided the project we have submitted and says that we are proposing to add the People's Commissariat of Agriculture to the Council of Labour and Defence. Quite right, we are proposing such a project. In it we assign a very modest place to the Council of Labour and Defence, making it a Commission of Labour and Defence under the Council of People's Commissars. Until now we have been working in the Council of Labour and Defence without any constitution. The powers of the Council of People's Commissars and the Council of Labour and Defence have been poorly defined; we have sometimes exceeded these powers and acted as a legislative body. But there has never been any conflict on these grounds. Such cases have been settled by immediately referring them to the Council of People's Commissars. When it became apparent that the Council of Labour and Defence must be converted into a body for the closer co-ordination of economic policy, the question arose how to give legal definition to these relations. There are two plans before us. One of them calls for the demarcation of the competence of the Council of People's Commissars and that of the Council of Labour and Defence. To do this, numerous codifiers must be engaged and reams of paper used, and even then there will be no guarantee that mistakes will not be made.*

Let us set about it in a different way. The Council of Labour and Defence has been regarded as something almost equal to the Council of People's Commissars. Let us abandon that idea. Let it be a commission of the Council of People's Commissars. We shall avoid a great deal of friction and shall achieve more rapid practical realisation. If any member of the Council of People's Commissars is dissatisfied, let him bring his complaint before the Council of People's Commissars; it can be summoned in a few hours, as you know. In this way we shall avoid friction between departments and will make the Council of Labour and Defence a rapidly acting body. That is no easy problem. It is bound up with the actual creation of a single economic plan. The problem, for the solution of which we have done something and for which we have been preparing for two years, is to achieve the unification of the Commissariats for the various branches of the economy. That is why I draw your attention to this bill on the Council of Labour and Defence, and I hope that, with the necessary amendments, you will endorse it. The work of uniting these Commissariats will then proceed more smoothly, rapidly, firmly and energetically.

*I now come to the last item—the question of electrification, which stands on the agenda of the Congress. You are to hear a report on this subject. I think that we are witnessing a momentous change, one which in any case marks the beginning of important successes for the Soviets. Henceforth the rostrum at All-Russia Congresses will be mounted not only by politicians and administrators but also by engineers and agronomists. This marks the beginning of that very happy time when politics will recede into the background, when politics will be discussed less often and at shorter length, and engineers and agronomists will do most of the talking. To really proceed with the work of economic development, this custom must be initiated at the All-Russia Congress of Soviets and in all Soviets and organisations, newspapers, organs of propaganda and agitation, and all institutions, from top to bottom.*

We have, no doubt, learnt politics; here we stand as firm as a rock. But things are bad as far as economic matters are concerned. Henceforth, less politics will be the best politics. Bring more engineers and agronomists to the fore, learn from them. Keep an eye on their work, and turn our congresses and conferences, not into propaganda meetings but into bodies that will verify our economic achievements, bodies in which we can really learn the business of economic development.

You will hear the report of the State Electrification Commission, which was set up in conformity with the decision of the All-Russia Central Executive Committee of February 7, 1920. On February 21, the Presidium of the Supreme Council of the National Economy signed the final ordinance determining the composition of the commission, and a number of leading experts and workers, mainly from the Supreme Council of the National Economy, over a hundred of them, and also from the People's Commissariat of Railways and the People's Commissariat of Agriculture, are devoting their entire energy to this work. We have before us the results of the work of the State Commission for the Electrification of Russia in the shape of this small volume which will be distributed to you today or tomorrow.<sup>198</sup> I trust you will not be scared by this little volume. I think I shall have no difficulty in convincing you of the particular importance of this book. In my opinion it is the second programme of our Party. We have a Party programme which has been excellently explained by Comrades Preobrazhensky and Bukharin in the form of a book which is less voluminous, but extremely useful. That is the political programme; it is an enumeration of our objectives, an explanation of the relations between classes and masses. It must, however, also be realised that the time has come to take this road in actual fact and to measure the practical



results achieved. Our Party programme must not remain solely a programme of the Party. It must become a programme of our economic development, or otherwise it will be valueless even as a programme of the Party. It must be supplemented with a second Party programme, a plan of work aimed at restoring our entire economy and raising it to the level of up-to-date technical development. Without a plan of electrification, we cannot undertake any real constructive work. When we discuss the restoration of agriculture, industry and transport, and their harmonious co-ordination, we are obliged to discuss a broad economic plan. We must adopt a definite plan. Of course, it will be a plan adopted as a first approximation. This Party programme will not be as invariable as our real Party programme is, which can be modified by Party congresses alone. No, day by day this programme will be improved, elaborated, perfected and modified, in every workshop and in every volost. We need it as a first draft, which will be submitted to the whole of Russia as a great economic plan designed for a period of not less than ten years and indicating how Russia is to be placed on the real economic basis required for communism. What was one of the most powerful incentives that multiplied our strength and our energies to a tremendous degree when we fought and won on the war front? It was the realisation of danger. Everybody asked whether it was possible that the landowners and capitalists might return to Russia. And the reply was that it was. We therefore multiplied our efforts a hundredfold, and we were victorious.

Take the economic front, and ask whether capitalism can be restored economically in Russia. We have combated the Sukharevka<sup>199</sup> black market. The other day, just prior to the opening of the All-Russia Congress of Soviets, this not very pleasant institution was closed down by the Moscow Soviet of Workers' and Red Army Deputies. (*Applause.*) The Sukharevka black market has been closed but it is not that market that is so sinister. The old Sukharevka market on Sukharevskaya Square has been closed down, an act that presented no difficulty. The sinister thing is the "Sukharevka" that resides in the heart and behaviour of every petty proprietor. This is the "Sukharevka" that must be closed down. That "Sukharevka" is the basis of capitalism. While it exists, the capitalists may return to Russia and may grow stronger than we are. That must be clearly realised. It must serve as the mainspring of our work and as a condition and yardstick of our real success. While we live in a small-peasant country, there is a firmer economic basis for capitalism in Russia than for communism. That must be borne in mind. Anyone who has carefully observed life in the countryside, as compared with life in the cities, knows that we have not torn

up the roots of capitalism and have not undermined the foundation, the basis, of the internal enemy. The latter depends on small-scale production, and there is only one way of undermining it, namely, to place the economy of the country, including agriculture, on a new technical basis, that of modern large-scale production. Only electricity provides that basis.

*Communism is Soviet power plus the electrification of the whole country.* Otherwise the country will remain a small-peasant country, and we must clearly realise that. We are weaker than capitalism, not only on the world scale, but also within the country. That is common knowledge. We have realised it, and we shall see to it that the economic basis is transformed from a small-peasant basis into a large-scale industrial basis. Only when the country has been electrified, and industry, agriculture and transport have been placed on the technical basis of modern large-scale industry, only then shall we be fully victorious.

We have already drawn up a preliminary plan for the electrification of the country; two hundred of our best scientific and technical men have worked on it. We have a plan which gives us estimates of materials and finances covering a long period of years, not less than a decade. This plan indicates how many million barrels of cement and how many million bricks we shall require for the purpose of electrification. To accomplish the task of electrification from the financial point of view, the estimates are between 1,000 and 1,200 million gold rubles. You know that we are far from being able to meet this sum from our gold reserves. Our stock of foodstuffs is not very large either. We must therefore meet the expenditure indicated in these estimates by means of concessions, in accordance with the plan I have mentioned. You will see the calculation showing how the restoration of our industry and our transport is being planned on this basis.

I recently had occasion to attend a peasant festival held in Volokolamsk Uyezd, a remote part of Moscow Gubernia, where the peasants have electric lighting. A meeting was arranged in the street, and one of the peasants came forward and began to make a speech welcoming this new event in the lives of the peasants. "We peasants were unenlightened," he said, "and now light has appeared among us, an 'unnatural light, which will light up our peasant darkness'." For my part, these words did not surprise me. Of course, to the non-Party peasant masses electric light is an "unnatural" light; but what we consider unnatural is that the peasants and workers should have lived for hundreds and thousands of years in such backwardness, poverty and oppression under the yoke of the landowners and the capitalists. You cannot emerge from this darkness very rapidly.

What we must now try is to convert every electric power station we build into a stronghold of enlightenment to be used to make the masses electricity-conscious, so to speak. All should be made aware of the reason why these small electric power stations, whose numbers run into the dozens, are linked up with the restoration of industry. We have an established plan of electrification, but the fulfilment of this plan is designed to cover a number of years. We must fulfil this plan at all costs, and the period of its fulfilment must be reduced. Here we must have the same thing as was the case with one of our first economic plans, the plan for the restoration of transport—Order No. 1042—which was designed to cover a period of five years, but has now been reduced to three and a half years because we are ahead of the schedule. To carry out the electrification plan we may need a period of ten or twenty years to effect the changes that will preclude any return to capitalism. This will be an example of rapid social development without precedent anywhere in the world. The plan must be carried out at all costs, and its deadline brought nearer.

This is the first time that we have set about economic work in such a fashion that, besides separate plans which have arisen in separate sections of industry as, for instance, in the transport system and have been brought into other branches of industry, we now have an all-over plan calculated for a number of years. This is hard work, designed to bring about the victory of communism.

It should, however, be realised and remembered that we cannot carry out electrification with the illiterates we have. Our commission will endeavour to stamp out illiteracy—but that is not enough. It has done a good deal compared with the past, but it has done little compared with what has to be done. Besides literacy, we need cultured, enlightened and educated working people; the majority of the peasants must be made fully aware of the tasks awaiting us. This programme of the Party must be a basic book to be used in every school. You will find in it in addition to the general plan of electrification, separate plans for every district of Russia. Thus every comrade who goes to the provinces will have a definite scheme of electrification for his district, a scheme for transition from darkness and ignorance to a normal life. And, comrades, you can and must compare the theses you have been presented with, elaborate and check them on the spot; you must see to it that when the question "What is communism?" is asked in any school and in any study circle, the answer should contain not only what is written in the Party programme but should also say how we can emerge from the state of ignorance.

Our best men, our economic experts, have accomplished the task we set them of drawing up a plan for the electrification of Russia and the restoration of her economy. We must now see to it that the workers and peasants should realise how great and difficult this task is, how it must be approached and tackled.

We must see to it that every factory and every electric power station becomes a centre of enlightenment; if Russia is covered with a dense network of electric power stations and powerful technical installations, our communist economic development will become a model for a future socialist Europe and Asia. (*Stormy and prolonged applause.*)

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## 2

### DRAFT RESOLUTION OF THE EIGHTH CONGRESS OF SOVIETS ON THE REPORT ON ELECTRIFICATION

The Fifth All-Russia Congress of Soviets,  
after hearing the report of the Chairman of the State Commission for the Electrification of Russia, expresses its thanks, in the first place, to the Presidium of the Supreme Council of the National Economy and also to the People's Commissariat of Agriculture and the People's Commissariat of Railways, and particularly to the Commission for the Electrification of Russia for their work in drawing up the plan for the electrification of Russia.

The Congress instructs the All-Russia Central Executive Committee, the Council of People's Commissars, the Council of Labour and Defence, the Presidium of the Supreme Council of the National Economy and also the other People's Commissariats to complete the elaboration of this plan and to endorse it without fail at the earliest date.

The Congress further instructs the government and requests the All-Russia Central Council of Trade Unions and the All-Russia Congress of Trade Unions to take all measures to conduct the widest possible propaganda for this plan and to make the broadest sections of the population in town and countryside familiar with it. The study of this plan must be introduced into all educational establishments in the Republic without exception; every electric power station and every tolerably well organ-

ised factory and state farm must become a centre for teaching the principles of electricity and modern industry, a centre of propaganda for the plan of electrification, and of its systematic study. All persons possessing sufficient scientific or practical knowledge must be mobilised for the purpose of conducting propaganda for the electrification plan and for imparting to others the knowledge necessary to understand it.

The Congress expresses its firm conviction that all Soviet institutions, all Soviets, and all industrial workers and working peasants will exert every effort and shrink from no sacrifice to carry out the plan for the electrification of Russia at all costs, and despite all obstacles.

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1920

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## ONCE AGAIN ON THE TRADE UNIONS, THE CURRENT SITUATION AND THE MISTAKES OF TROTSKY AND BUKHARIN<sup>200</sup>

The Party discussion and the factional struggle, which is of a type that occurs before a congress—before and in connection with the impending elections to the Tenth Congress of the R.C.P.—are waxing hot. The first factional pronouncement, namely, the one made by Comrade Trotsky on behalf of “a number of responsible workers” in his “platform pamphlet” (*The Role and Tasks of the Trade Unions*, with a preface dated December 25, 1920), was followed by a sharp pronouncement (the reader will see from what follows that it was deservedly sharp) by the Petrograd organisation of the R.C.P. (“Appeal to the Party”, published in *Petrogradskaya Pravda* on January 6, 1921, and in the Party’s Central Organ, the Moscow *Pravda*, on January 13, 1921). The Moscow Committee then came out against the Petrograd organisation (in the same issue of *Pravda*). Then appeared a verbatim report, published by the bureau of the R.C.P. group of the All-Russia Central Council of Trade Unions, of the discussion that took place on December 30, 1920, at a very large and important Party meeting, namely, that of the R.C.P. group at the Eighth Congress of Soviets. It is entitled *The Role of the Trade Unions in Production* (with a preface dated January 6, 1921). This, of course, is by no means all of the discussion material. Party meetings to discuss these issues are being held almost everywhere. On December 30, 1920, I spoke<sup>†</sup> at a meeting in conditions in which, as I put it then, I “departed from the rules of procedure”, i.e., in conditions in which I could not take part in the discussion or hear the preceding and subsequent speakers. I shall now try to make amends and express myself in a more “orderly” fashion.

## THE DANGER OF FACTIONAL PRONOUNCEMENTS TO THE PARTY

Is Comrade Trotsky's pamphlet *The Role and Tasks of the Trade Unions* a factional pronouncement? Irrespective of its content, is there any danger to the Party in a pronouncement of this kind? Attempts to hush up this question are a particularly favourite exercise with the members of the Moscow Committee (with the exception of Comrade Trotsky, of course), who see the factionalism of the Petrograd comrades, and with Comrade Bukharin, who, however, felt obliged, on December 30, 1920, to make the following statement on behalf of the "buffer group"<sup>201</sup>:

"...when a train seems to be heading for a crash, a buffer is not a bad thing at all" (report of the December 30, 1920 discussion, p. 45)

So there is some danger of a crash. Can we conceive of intelligent members of the Party being indifferent to the question of how, where and when this danger arose?

Trotsky's pamphlet opens with the statement that "it is the fruit of collective work", that "a number of responsible workers, particularly trade unionists (members of the Presidium of the All-Russia Central Council of Trade Unions, the Central Committee of the Metalworkers' Union, Tsektran and others)" took part in compiling it, and that it is a "platform pamphlet". At the end of thesis 4 we read that "the forthcoming Party Congress will have to *choose* (Trotsky's italics) between the two trends within the trade union movement".

If this is not the formation of a faction by a member of the Central Committee, if this does not mean "heading for a crash", then let Comrade Bukharin, or anyone of his fellow-thinkers, explain to the Party any other possible meaning of the words "factionalism", and the Party "seems to be heading for a crash". Who can be more purblind than men wishing to play the "buffer" and *closing their eyes to such a "danger of a crash"?*

Just imagine: after the Central Committee had spent two plenary meetings (November 9 and December 7) in an unprecedentedly long, detailed and heated discussion of Comrade Trotsky's original draft theses and of the entire trade union policy that he advocates for the Party, one member of the Central Committee, *one out of nineteen*, forms a group outside the Central Committee and presents its "collective work" as a "platform", inviting the Party Congress "to choose between *two* trends"! This, incidentally, quite apart from the fact that Comrade Trotsky's announcement of two and only two trends on December 25,

1920, despite Bukharin's coming out as a "buffer" on November 9, is a glaring exposure of the Bukharin group's true role as abettors of the worst and most harmful sort of factionalism. But I ask any Party member: Don't you find this attack and insistence upon "choosing" between two trends in the trade union movement rather sudden? What is there for us to do but stare in astonishment at the fact that after three years of the proletarian distatorship even one Party member can be found to "attack" the two trends issue *in this way*?

Nor is that all. Look at the factional attacks in which this pamphlet abounds. In the very first thesis we find a threatening "gesture" at "certain workers in the trade union movement" who are thrown "back to trade unionism, pure and simple, which the Party repudiated in principle long ago" (evidently the Party is represented by only one member of the Central Committee's nineteen). Thesis 8 grandiloquently condemns "the craft conservatism prevalent among the top trade union functionaries" (note the truly bureaucratic concentration of attention on the "top"! ). Thesis 11 opens with the astonishingly tactful, conclusive and business-like (what is the most polite word for it?) "hint" that the "majority of the trade unionists . . . give only formal, that is, *verbal*, recognition" to the resolutions of the Party's Ninth Congress.

We find that we have some very authoritative judges before us who say the *majority* (!) of the trade unionists give only *verbal* recognition to the Party's decisions.

Thesis 12 reads:

" . . . many trade unionists take an ever more aggressive and uncompromising stand against the prospect of 'coalescence' . . . Among them we find Comrades Tomsky and Lozovsky.

"What is more, many trade unionists, balking at the new tasks and methods, tend to cultivate in their midst a spirit of corporative exclusiveness and hostility for the new men who are being drawn into the given branch of the economy, thereby actually fostering the survivals of craft-unionism among the organised workers "

Let the reader go over these arguments carefully and ponder them. They simply abound in "gems". Firstly, the pronouncement must be assessed from the standpoint of factionalism! Imagine what Trotsky would have said, and how he would have said it, if Tomsky had published a platform accusing Trotsky and "many" military workers of cultivating the spirit of bureaucracy, fostering the survivals of savagery, etc. What is the "role" of Bukharin, Preobrazhensky, Serebryakov and the others who fail to see—positively fail to note, utterly fail to note—the aggressiveness and factionalism of all *this*, and refuse to see how much more factional it is than the pronouncement of the Petrograd comrades?



Secondly, take a closer look at the approach to the subject: many trade unionists "tend to cultivate in their midst a spirit".... This is an out-and-out bureaucratic approach. The whole point, you see, is not the level of development and living conditions of the masses in their millions, but the "spirit" which Tomsy and Lozovsky tend to cultivate "in their midst".

Thirdly, Comrade Trotsky has unwittingly revealed the *essence* of the whole controversy which he and the Bukharin and Co. "buffer" have been evading and camouflaging with such care.

What is the point at issue? Is it the fact that many trade unionists are balking at the new tasks and methods and tend to cultivate in their midst a spirit of hostility for the new officials?

Or is it that the masses of organised workers are legitimately protesting and inevitably showing readiness to throw out the new officials who refuse to rectify the useless and harmful excesses of bureaucracy?

Is it that someone has refused to understand the "new tasks and methods"?

Or is it that someone is making a clumsy attempt to cover up his defence of certain useless and harmful excesses of bureaucracy with a lot of talk about new tasks and methods?

It is this *essence* of the dispute that the reader should bear in mind.

## FORMAL DEMOCRACY AND THE REVOLUTIONARY INTEREST

"Workers' democracy is free from fetishes", Comrade Trotsky writes in his theses, which are the "fruit of collective work". "Its sole consideration is the revolutionary interest" (thesis 23).

Comrade Trotsky's theses have landed him in a mess. That part of them which is correct is not new and, what is more, turns *against* him. That which is new is all wrong.

I have written out Comrade Trotsky's correct propositions. They turn against him not only on the point in thesis 23 (Glavpolitput<sup>202</sup>) but on the others as well.

Under the rules of formal democracy, Trotsky *had a right* to come out with a factional platform even against the whole of the Central Committee. That is indisputable. What is also indisputable is that the Central Committee had endorsed this formal right by its decision on freedom of discussion adopted on December 24, 1920. Bukharin, the buffer, recognises this formal right for Trotsky, but not for the Petrograd organisation,

probably because on December 30, 1920, he talked himself into "the sacred slogan of workers' democracy" (verbatim report, p. 45)....

Well, and what about the revolutionary interest?

Will any serious-minded person who is not blinded by the factional egotism of "Tsektran" or of the "buffer" faction, will anyone in his right mind say that *such* a pronouncement on the trade union issue by *such* a prominent leader as Trotsky does promote *the revolutionary interest*?

Can it be denied that, even if Trotsky's "new tasks and methods" were as sound as they are in fact unsound (of which later), his very approach would be damaging to himself, the Party, the trade union movement, the training of millions of trade union members and the Republic?

It looks as if the kind Bukharin and his group call themselves a "buffer" because they have firmly decided *not to think* about the obligations this title imposes upon them.

## THE POLITICAL DANGER OF SPLITS IN THE TRADE UNION MOVEMENT

Everyone knows that big disagreements sometimes grow out of minute differences, which may at first appear to be altogether insignificant. A slight cut or scratch, of the kind everyone has had scores of in the course of his life, may become very dangerous and even fatal *if* it festers and *if* blood poisoning sets in. This may happen in any kind of conflict, even a purely personal one. This also happens in politics.

Any difference, even an insignificant one, may become politically dangerous if, it has a chance to grow into a split, and I mean the kind of split that will shake and destroy the whole political edifice, or lead, to use Comrade Bukharin's simile, to a crash.

Clearly, in a country under the dictatorship of the proletariat, a split in the ranks of the proletariat, or between the proletarian party and the mass of the proletariat, is not just dangerous; it is extremely dangerous, especially when the proletariat constitutes a small minority of the population. And splits in the trade union movement (which, as I tried hard to emphasise in my speech on December 30, 1920, is a movement of the almost completely organised proletariat\* mean precisely splits in the mass of the proletariat.

\* See V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 32, p. 19.—Ed.

That is why, when the whole thing started at the Fifth All-Russia Conference of Trade Unions on November 2-6, 1920 (and that is exactly where it did start), and when right after the Conference—no, I am mistaken, *during* that Conference—Comrade Tomskey appeared before the Political Bureau in high dudgeon and, fully supported by Comrade Rudzutak, the most even-tempered of men, began to relate that at the Conference Comrade Trotsky had talked about “shaking up” the trade unions and that he, Tomskey, had opposed this—when that happened, I decided there and then that policy (i.e., the Party’s trade union policy) lay at the root of the controversy, and that Comrade Trotsky, with his “shake-up” policy against Comrade Tomskey, was entirely in the wrong. For, *even if the “shake-up” policy were partly justified* by the “new tasks and methods” (Trotsky’s thesis 12), it cannot be tolerated at the present time, and in the present situation, because it threatens a split.

It now seems to Comrade Trotsky that it is “an utter travesty” to ascribe the “shake-up-from-above” policy to him (L. Trotsky, “A Reply to the Petrograd Comrades”, *Pravda* No. 9, January 15, 1921). But “shake-up” is a real “catchword”, not only in the sense that after being uttered by Comrade Trotsky at the Fifth All-Russia Conference of Trade Unions it has, you might say, “caught on” throughout the Party and the trade unions. Unfortunately, it remains true even today in the much more profound sense that it alone epitomises *the whole spirit, the whole trend* of the platform pamphlet entitled *The Role and Tasks of the Trade Unions*. Comrade Trotsky’s platform pamphlet is shot through with the spirit of the “shake-up-from-above” policy. Just recall the accusation made against Comrade Tomskey, or “many trade unionists”, that they “tend to cultivate in their midst a spirit of hostility for the new men”!

But whereas the Fifth All-Russia Conference of Trade Unions (November 2-6, 1920) only saw the makings of the atmosphere fraught with splits, the split within Tsektran became a fact in early December 1920.

This event is basic and essential to an understanding of the political essence of our controversies; and Comrades Trotsky and Bukharin are mistaken if they think hushing it up will help matters. A hush-up in this case does not produce a “buffer” effect but rouses passions; for the question has not only been placed on the agenda by developments, but has been emphasised by Comrade Trotsky in his platform pamphlet. It is this pamphlet that repeatedly, in the passages I have quoted, particularly in thesis 12, raises the question of whether the essence of the matter is that “many trade unionists tend to cultivate in their midst a spirit of hostility for the new men”, or that the “hostility” of

the *masses* is legitimate in view of certain useless and harmful excesses of bureaucracy, for example, in Tsektran.

The issue was bluntly and properly stated by Comrade Zinoviev in his very first speech on December 30, 1920, when he said that it was "Comrade Trotsky's immoderate adherents" who had brought about a split. Perhaps that is why Comrade Bukharin abusively described Comrade Zinoviev's speech as "a lot of hot air." But every Party member who reads the verbatim report of the December 30, 1920 discussion will see that that is not true. He will find that it is Comrade Zinoviev who quotes and operates with the facts, and that it is Trotsky and Bukharin who indulge most in intellectualist verbosity minus the facts.

When Comrade Zinoviev said, "Tsektran stands on feet of clay and has already split into three parts", Comrade Sosnovsky interrupted and said:

"That is something you have encouraged" (verbatim report, p. 15).

Now this is a serious charge. If it were proved, there would, of course, be no place on the Central Committee, in the R.C.P., or in the trade unions of our Republic for those who were guilty of *encouraging a split* even in one of the trade unions. Happily, this serious charge was advanced in a thoughtless manner by a comrade who, I regret to say, has now and again been "carried away" by thoughtless polemics before this. Comrade Sosnovsky has even managed to insert "a fly in the ointment" of his otherwise excellent articles, say, on production propaganda, and this has tended to negate all its pluses. Some people (like Comrade Bukharin) are so happily constituted that they are incapable of injecting venom into their attacks even when the fight is bitterest; others, less happily constituted, are liable to do so, and do this all too often. Comrade Sosnovsky would do well to watch his step in this respect, and perhaps even ask his friends to help out.

But, some will say, the charge is there, even if it has been made in a thoughtless, unfortunate and patently "factional" form. In a serious matter, the badly worded truth is preferable to the hush-up.

That the matter is serious is beyond doubt, for, let me say this again, the *crux* of the issue lies in this area to a greater extent than is generally suspected. Fortunately, we are in possession of sufficiently objective and conclusive facts to provide an answer *in substance* to Comrade Sosnovsky's point.

First of all, there is on the same page of the verbatim report Comrade Zinoviev's statement denying Comrade Sosnovsky's allegation and making precise references to conclusive facts.

Comrade Zinoviev showed that Comrade Trotsky's accusation (made obviously, let me add, in an outburst of factional zeal) was quite a different one from Comrade Sosnovsky's; Comrade Trotsky's accusation was that Comrade Zinoviev's *speech at the September All-Russia Conference of the R.C.P.* had helped to bring about or had brought about the split. (This charge, let me say in parenthesis, is quite untenable, if only because Zinoviev's September speech was approved in substance by the Central Committee and the Party, and there has been no formal protest against it since.)

Comrade Zinoviev replied that at the Central Committee meeting Comrade Rudzutak had used the minutes to prove that "*long before any of my (Zinoviev's) speeches and the All-Russia Conference the question [concerning certain unwarranted and harmful excesses of bureaucracy in Tsektran] had been examined in Siberia, on the Volga, in the North and in the South*".

That is an absolutely precise and clear-cut statement of fact. It was made by Comrade Zinoviev in his first speech before thousands of the most responsible Party members, and his facts were *not* refuted either by Comrade Trotsky, who spoke *twice later*, or by Comrade Bukharin, who *also spoke later*.

Secondly, the December 7, 1920 *resolution of the Central Committee's Plenary Meeting concerning the dispute between the Communists working in water transport and the Communist group at the Tsektran Conference*, given in the same verbatim report, was an even more definite and official refutation of Comrade Sosnovsky's charges. The part of the resolution dealing with Tsektran says:

"In connection with the dispute between Tsektran and the water transport workers, the Central Committee resolves: 1) To set up a Water Transport Section within the amalgamated Tsektran; 2) To convene a congress of railwaymen and water transport workers in February to hold normal elections to a new Tsektran; 3) To authorise the old Tsektran to function until then; 4) To abolish Glavpolitvod and Glavpolitput immediately and to transfer all their funds and resources to the trade union on normal democratic lines"

This shows that the water transport workers, far from being censured, are deemed to be *right* in every essential. Yet *none* of the C.C. members who had signed the common platform of January 14, 1921 (except Kamenev) voted for the resolution. (The platform referred to is the *Role and Tasks of the Trade Unions. Draft Decision of the Tenth Congress of the R.C.P.*, submitted to the Central Committee by a group of members of the Central Committee and the trade union commission. Among those who signed it was Lozovsky, a member of the trade union commission but not of the Central Committee. The others were

Tomsky, Kalinin, Rudzutak, Zinoviev, Stalin, Lenin, Kamenev, Petrovsky and Artyom Sergeev<sup>203</sup>.)

This resolution was carried *against* the C.C. members listed above, that is, against our group, for we would have voted against allowing the old Tsektran to continue temporarily. Because we were sure to win, Trotsky was forced to vote for Bukharin's resolution, as otherwise our resolution would have been carried. Comrade Rykov, who had been *for* Trotsky in November, took part in the trade union commission's examination of the dispute between Tsektran and the water transport workers in December, and saw that the latter were right.

To sum up: the December 7 majority in the Central Committee consisted of Comrades Trotsky, Bukharin, Preobrazhensky, Serebryakov and other C.C. members who are above suspicion of being biased *against* Tsektran. Yet the substance of their resolution did not censure the water transport workers but Tsektran, which they just stopped short of dissolving there and then. This proves Sosnovsky's charge to be quite groundless.

There is one other point to be dealt with, if we are to leave no room for ambiguity. What were these "certain unwarranted and harmful excesses of bureaucracy" to which I have repeatedly referred? Isn't *this* last charge unsupported or exaggerated?

Once again it was Comrade Zinoviev who, in his very first speech on December 30, 1920, provided the answer which was as precise as one could wish. He quoted from Comrade Zoff's water transport circular<sup>204</sup> of May 3, 1920: "Committee treadmill abolished." Comrade Zinoviev was quite right in saying this was a fundamental error. It exemplified the unwarranted and harmful excesses of bureaucracy and the "appointments system". But he said there and then that some appointees were "not half as experienced or as tried" as Comrade Zoff. I have heard Comrade Zoff referred to in the Central Committee as a most valuable worker, and this is fully borne out by my own observations in the Council of Defence. It has not entered anyone's mind either to make scapegoats of such comrades or to undermine their authority (as Comrade Trotsky suggests, without the least justification, on page 25 of his report). Their authority is not being undermined by those who try to correct the "appointees'" mistakes, but by those who would defend them even when they are wrong.

We see, therefore, that the danger of splits within the trade union movement was not imaginary but real. And we find that the actual disagreements really boiled down to a demand that certain unwarranted and harmful excesses of bureaucracy, and the appointments system should not be justified or defended, but corrected. That is all there is to it.

## DISAGREEMENTS ON PRINCIPLE

There being deep and basic disagreements on principle—we may well be asked—do they not serve as vindication for the sharpest and most factional pronouncements? Is it possible to vindicate such a thing as a split, provided there is need to drive home some entirely new idea?

I believe it is, provided of course the disagreements are truly very deep and there is no other way to rectify a wrong trend in the policy of the Party or of the working class.

But the whole point is that there are no such disagreements. Comrade Trotsky has tried to point them out, and failed. A tentative or conciliatory approach had been possible—and necessary—*before* the publication of his pamphlet (December 25) (“such an approach is ruled out even in the case of disagreements and vague new tasks”); but *after* its publication we had to say: Comrade Trotsky is essentially wrong on all his new points.

This is most evident from a comparison of his theses with Rudzutak’s which were adopted by the Fifth All-Russia Conference of Trade Unions (November 2-6). I quoted the latter in my December 30 speech and in the January 21 issue of *Pravda*.<sup>\*</sup> They are fuller and more correct than Trotsky’s, and wherever the latter differs from Rudzutak, he is wrong.

Take this famous “industrial democracy”, which Comrade Bukharin hastened to insert in the Central Committee’s resolution of December 7. It would, of course, be ridiculous to quibble about this ill-conceived brainchild (“tricky flourishes”), if it merely occurred in an article or speech. But, after all, it was Trotsky and Bukharin who put themselves into the ridiculous position by *insisting in their theses* on this very term, which is the one feature that distinguishes their “platforms” from Rudzutak’s theses adopted by the trade unions.

The term is theoretically wrong. In the final analysis, every kind of democracy, as political superstructure in general (which must exist until classes have been abolished and a classless society established), serves production and is ultimately determined by the relations of production in a given society. It is, therefore, meaningless to single out “industrial democracy”, for this leads to confusion, and the result is a dummy. That is the first point.

The second is that if you look at Bukharin’s own explanation given in the resolution of the C.C. Plenary Meeting on December 7, which he drafted, you will find that he says: “Accordingly, the methods of workers’ democracy must be those of industrial

<sup>\*</sup> See V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 32, pp. 38-40.—Ed.

democracy, which means..." Note the "which means"! The fact is that Bukharin opens his appeal to the masses with such an outlandish term that he must *give a gloss* on it. This, I think, is *undemocratic* from the democratic standpoint. You must write for the masses without using terms that require a glossary. This is bad from the "production" standpoint because time is wasted in explaining unnecessary terms. "Which means," he says, "that nomination and seconding of candidates, elections, etc., must proceed with an eye not only to their political staunchness, but also business efficiency, administrative experience, leadership, and proved concern for the working people's material and spiritual interests."

The reasoning there is obviously artificial and incorrect. For one thing, democracy is more than "nomination and seconding of candidates, elections, etc." Then, again, not all elections should be held with an eye to political staunchness and business efficiency. Comrade Trotsky notwithstanding, an organisation of many millions must have a certain percentage of canvassers and bureaucrats (we shall not be able to make do without good bureaucrats for many years to come). But we do not speak of "canvassing" or "bureaucratic" democracy.

The third point is that it is wrong to consider only the elected, the organisers, the administrators, etc. After all, they constitute a minority of outstanding men. It is the mass, the rank and file that we must consider. Rudzutak has it in simpler, more intelligible and theoretically more correct terms (thesis 6):

"... it must be brought home to each participant in production that his production tasks are appropriate and important; that each must not only take a hand in fulfilling his assignments, but also play an intelligent part in correcting any technical and organisational defects in the sphere of production"

The fourth point is that "industrial democracy" is a term that lends itself to misinterpretation. It may be read as a repudiation of dictatorship and individual authority. It may be read as a suspension of ordinary democracy or a pretext for evading it. Both readings are harmful, and cannot be avoided without long special commentaries.

Rudzutak's plain statement of the same ideas is more correct and more handy. This is indirectly confirmed by Trotsky's parallel of "war democracy" which he draws with his own term in an article, "Industrial Democracy", in *Pravda* of January 11, and which fails to refute that his term is inaccurate and inconvenient (for he side-steps the whole issue and fails to compare his theses with Rudzutak's). Happily, as far as I can recall, we have never had any factional controversy over that kind of term.

Trotsky's "production atmosphere" is even wider of the mark, and Zinoviev had good reason to laugh at it. This made Trotsky



very angry, and he came out with this argument: "We once had a war atmosphere. . . . We must now have a production atmosphere and not only on the surface but deep down in the workers' mass. This must be as intense and practical an interest in production as was earlier displayed in the fronts. . . ." Well, there you are: the message must be carried "deep down into the workers' mass" in the language of Rudzutak's theses, because "production atmosphere" will only earn you a smile or a shrug. Comrade Trotsky's "production atmosphere" has essentially the same meaning as production propaganda, but such expressions must be avoided when production propaganda is addressed to the workers at large. The term is an example of how *not* to carry it on among the masses.

### **POLITICS AND ECONOMICS. DIALECTICS AND ECLECTICISM**

It is strange that we should have to return to such elementary questions, but we are unfortunately forced to do so by Trotsky and Bukharin. They have both reproached me for "switching" the issue, or for taking a "political" approach, while theirs is an "economic" one. Bukharin even put that in his theses and tried to "rise above" either side, as if to say that he was combining the two.

This is a glaring theoretical error. I said again in my speech that politics is a concentrated expression of economics, because I had earlier heard my "political" approach rebuked in a manner which is inconsistent and inadmissible for a Marxist. Politics must take precedence over economics. To argue otherwise is to forget the ABC of Marxism.

Am I wrong in my political appraisal? If you think so, say it and prove it. But you forget the ABC of Marxism when you say (or imply) that the political approach is equivalent to the "economic", and that you can take "the one and the other".

What the political approach means, in other words, is that the wrong attitude to the trade unions will ruin the Soviet power and topple the dictatorship of the proletariat. (In a peasant country like Russia, the Soviet power would surely go down in the event of a split between the trade unions and a Party in the wrong.) This proposition can (and must) be tested in substance, which means looking into the rights and wrongs of the approach and taking a decision. To say: I "appreciate" your political approach, "*but*" it is only a political one and we "*also* need an economic one", is tantamount to saying: I "appreciate" your point that in taking that particular step you are liable to break

your neck, *but* you must also take into consideration that it is better to be clothed and well-fed than to go naked and hungry.

Bukharin's insistence on combining the political *and* the economic approach has landed him in theoretical *eclecticism*.

Trotsky and Bukharin make as though they are concerned for the growth of production whereas we have nothing but formal democracy in mind. This picture is wrong, because the *only* formulation of the issue (which the Marxist standpoint *allows*) is: without a correct political approach to the matter the given class will be unable to stay on top, *and, consequently*, will be incapable of solving *its production problem* either.

Let us take a concrete example. Zinoviev says: "By carrying things to a split within the trade unions, you are making a political mistake. I spoke and wrote about the growth of production back in January 1920, citing the construction of the public baths as an example." Trotsky replies: "What a thing to boast of: a pamphlet with the public baths as an example (p. 29), 'and not a single word' about the tasks of the trade unions" (p. 22).

This is wrong. The example of the public baths is worth, you will pardon the pun, a dozen "production atmospheres", with a handful of "industrial democracies" thrown in. It tells the masses, the whole bulk of them, what the trade unions are to do, and does this in plain and intelligible terms, whereas all these "production atmospheres" and "democracies" are so much murk blurring the vision of the workers' masses, and *dimming* their understanding.

Comrade Trotsky also rebuked me for not "saying a word" (p. 66) about "the role that has to be played—and is being played—by the levers known as the trade union apparatus".

I beg to differ, Comrade Trotsky. By reading out Rudzutak's theses *in toto* and endorsing them, I made a statement on the question that was *fuller, plainer, clearer and more correct* than all your theses, your report or co-report, and speech in reply to the debate. I insist that bonuses in kind and disciplinary comrades' courts mean a great deal more to economic development, industrial management, and wider trade union participation in production than the absolutely abstract (and therefore empty) talk about "industrial democracy", "coalescence", etc.

Behind the effort to present the "production" standpoint (Trotsky) or to overcome a one-sided political approach and combine it with an economic approach (Bukharin) we find:

- 1) Neglect of Marxism, as expressed in the theoretically incorrect, eclectic definition of the relation between politics and economics;

- 2) Defence or camouflage of the political mistake expressed in the shake-up policy, which runs through the *whole* of Trotsky's

platform pamphlet, and which, unless it is admitted and corrected, *leads* to the collapse of the dictatorship of the proletariat;

3) A step back in purely economic and production matters, and the question of how to increase production; it is, in fact, a step back from Rudzutak's *practical* theses, with their concrete, vital and urgent tasks (develop production propaganda; learn proper distribution of bonuses in kind and correct use of coercion through disciplinary comrades' courts), to the high-brow, abstract, "empty" and theoretically incorrect general *theses* which *ignore* all that is most practical and business-like.

That is where Zinoviev and myself, on the one hand, and Trotsky and Bukharin, on the other, actually stand on this question of politics and economics.

I could not help smiling, therefore, when I read Comrade Trotsky's objection in his speech of December 30. "In his summing-up at the Eighth Congress of Soviets of the debate on the situation, Comrade Lenin said we ought to have less politics and more economics, but when he got to the trade union question he laid emphasis on the political aspect of the matter" (p. 65). Comrade Trotsky thought these words were "very much to the point". Actually, however, they reveal a terrible confusion of ideas, a truly hopeless "ideological confusion". Of course, I have always said, and will continue to say, that we need more economics and less politics, but if we are to have this we must clearly be rid of political dangers *and political mistakes*. Comrade Trotsky's political mistakes, aggravated by Comrade Bukharin, *distract* our Party's attention from economic tasks and "production" work, and *unfortunately, make us waste time* on correcting them and arguing it out with the syndicalist deviation (which leads to the collapse of the dictatorship of the proletariat), objecting to the incorrect approach to the trade union movement (which leads to the collapse of the Soviet power), and debating general "theses", instead of having a practical and business-like "economic" discussion as to whether it was the Saratov millers, the Donbas miners, the Petrograd metalworkers or some other group that had the best results in coalescing, distributing bonuses in kind, and organising comrades' courts, on the basis of Rudzutak's theses, adopted by the Fifth All-Russia Trade Union Conference on November 2-6.

Let us now consider what good there is in a "broad discussion". Once again we find political mistakes distracting attention from economic tasks. I was against this "broad" discussion, and I believed, and still do, that it was a mistake—a political mistake—on Comrade Trotsky's part to disrupt the work of the trade union commission, which ought to have held a business-like discussion. I believe Bukharin's buffer group made the political

mistake of misunderstanding the tasks of the buffer (in which case they had once again substituted eclecticism for dialectics), for from the "buffer" standpoint they should have vigorously opposed any broad discussion and demanded that the matter should be taken up by the trade union commission. Here is what came of this.

On December 30, Bukharin went so far as to say that "we have proclaimed the new and sacred slogan of workers' democracy, which means that questions are no longer to be discussed in the board-room within the corporation or at small meetings but are to be placed before big meetings. I insist that by taking the trade union issue before such a large meeting as this one we are not taking a step backward but forward" (p. 45). And this man has accused Zinoviev of spouting "hot air" and overdoing the democracy! I say that he himself has given us a lot of hot air and has shown some unexampled bungling; he has completely failed to understand that formal democracy must be subordinate to the revolutionary interest.

Trotsky is in the same boat. His charge is that "Lenin wants at all costs to disrupt or shelve the discussion of the matter in essence" (p. 65). He declares: "My reasons for refusing to serve on the commission were clearly stated in the Central Committee: until such time as I am permitted, on a par with all other comrades, to air these questions fully in the Party press, I do not expect any good to come of any cloistered examination of these matters, and, consequently, of work on the commission" (p. 69).

What is the result? Less than a month has passed since Trotsky started his "broad discussion" on December 25, and you will be hard put to find one responsible Party worker in a hundred who is not fed up with the discussion and has not realised its futility (to say no worse). For Trotsky has made the Party waste time on a discussion of words and bad theses, and has ridiculed as "cloistered" the *business-like* economic discussion in the commission, which was to have studied and verified practical experience and projected its lessons for *progress* in real "production" work, in place of the *regress* from vibrant activity to scholastic exercises in all sorts of "production atmospheres".

Take this famous "coalescence". My advice on December 30 was that we should keep mum on this point, because we had *not studied* our own practical experience, and without that any discussion was bound to degenerate into "hot air" and draw off the Party's forces *from* economic work. I said it was bureaucratic projecteering for Trotsky to propose in his theses that from one-third to one-half and from one-half to two-thirds of the economic councils should consist of trade unionists.\*

For this I was upbraided by Bukharin who, I see from p. 49 of the report, made a point of proving to me at length and in great detail that "when people meet to discuss something, they should not act as deaf-mutes" (*sic*). Trotsky was also angry and exclaimed:

"Will every one of you please make a note that on this particular date Comrade Lenin described this as a bureaucratic evil. I take the liberty to predict that within a few months we shall have accepted for our guidance and consideration that the All-Russia Central Council of Trade Unions and the Supreme Economic Council, the Central Committee of the Metalworkers' Union and the Metals Department, etc., are to have from one third to one half of their members in common" (p. 68)

When I read that I asked Comrade Milyutin (Deputy Chairman of the Supreme Economic Council) to let me have the available *printed* reports on coalescence. I said to myself: why not make a small start on the *study of our practical experience*; it's so dull engaging in "general Party talk" (Bukharin's expression, p. 47, which has every chance of becoming a catchword like "shake-up") to no useful purpose, without the facts, and inventing disagreements, definitions and "industrial democracies".

Comrade Milyutin sent me several books, including *The Report of the Supreme Economic Council to the Eighth All-Russia Congress of Soviets* (Moscow, 1920; preface dated December 19, 1920). On its p. 14 is a table showing workers' participation in administrative bodies. Here is the table (covering only part of the gubernia economic councils and factories).

Administrative body	Total members	Workers		Specialists		Other workers and others	
		Number	Per cent	Number	Per cent	Number	Per cent
Presidium of Supreme Economic Council and gubernia economic councils . . . . .	187	107	57.2	22	11.8	58	31.0
Collegiums of chief administrations, departments, central boards and head offices . . .	140	72	51.4	31	22.2	37	26.4
Corporate and one-man managements of factories . . . . .	1,143	726	63.5	398	34.8	19	1.7
<i>Total . . . . .</i>	1,470	905	61.6	451	30.7	114	7.7

It will be seen that 61.6 per cent, that is, closer to two-thirds than to one-half, of the staff of administrative bodies now consists of workers. And this *already proves* that what Trotsky wrote on this matter in his theses was an exercise in bureaucratic projecteering. To talk, argue and write platforms about "one-third to one-half" and "one-half to two-thirds" is the most useless sort of "general Party talk", which diverts time, attention and resources from *production* work. It is empty politicking. All this while, a great deal of good could have been done in the commission, where men of experience would have refused to write any theses without a study of the facts, say, by polling a dozen or so "common functionaries" (out of the thousand), by comparing their impressions and conclusions with objective statistical data, and by making an attempt to obtain practical guidance for the future: that being our experience, do we go straight on, or do we make some change in our course, methods and approach, and how; or do we call a halt, for the good of the cause, and check things over and over again, make a few changes here and there, and so on and so forth.

Comrades, a real "executive" (let me also have a go at "production propaganda") is well aware that even in the most advanced countries, the capitalists and their executives take years—sometimes ten and more—to study and test their own (and others') practical experience, making innumerable starts and corrections to tailor a system of management, select senior and junior executives, etc., fit for their particular business. That was the rule under capitalism, which throughout the civilised world based its business practices on *the experience and habits of centuries*. We who are breaking new ground must put in a long, persistent and patient effort to retrain men and change the old habits which have come down to us from capitalism, but this can only be done little by little. Trotsky's approach is quite wrong. In his December 30 speech he exclaimed: "Do or do not our workers, Party and trade union functionaries have any production training? Yes or no? I say: No" (p. 29). This is a ridiculous approach. It is like asking whether a division has enough felt boots: Yes or no?

It is safe to say that even ten years from now we shall have to admit that all our Party and trade union functionaries do not have enough production training, in much the same way as the workers of the Military Department, the trade unions and the Party will not have had enough military experience. But we have made a *start* on production training by having about a thousand workers, and trade union members and delegates take part in management and run factories, head offices and other bodies higher up the scale. The basic principle underlying "production

training"—which is the training of *our own selves*, of the old underground workers and professional journalists—is that we should start a painstaking and detailed study of our own practical experience, and teach others to do so, according to the rule: Look before you leap. The fundamental and absolute rule behind "production training" is systematic, circumspect, practical and business-like verification of what this one thousand have done, and even more efficient and careful correction of their work, taking a step forward only when there is ample proof of the usefulness of a given method, system of management, proportion, selection of men, etc. And it is this rule that Comrade Trotsky has broken by his theses and approach. All his theses, his entire platform pamphlet, are so wrong that they have diverted the Party's attention and resources from practical "production" work to a lot of empty talk.

### DIALECTICS AND ECLECTICISM. "SCHOOL" AND "APPARATUS"

Among Comrade Bukharin's many excellent traits are his theoretical ability and keen interest in getting at the theoretical roots of every question. That is a very valuable trait because you cannot have a proper understanding of any mistake, let alone a political one, unless you dig down to its theoretical roots among the basic premises of the one who makes it.

Responding to this urge, Comrade Bukharin tended to shift the controversy into the theoretical sphere, beginning from December 30, if not earlier.

In his speech on that day he said:

"That neither the political nor the economic factor can be ignored is I believe, absolutely incontrovertible—and that is the theoretical essence of what is here known as the 'buffer group' or its ideology" (p. 47)

The gist of his theoretical mistake in this case is substitution of eclecticism for the dialectical interplay of politics and economics (which we find in Marxism). His theoretical attitude is: "on the one hand, and on the other", "the one and the other". That is eclecticism. Dialectics requires an all-round consideration of relationships in their concrete development but not a patchwork of bits and pieces. I have shown this to be so on the example of politics and economics.

That of the "buffer" has gone to reinforce the point. You need a buffer, and it is useful when the Party train is heading for a crash. No question about that at all. Bukharin has built up his "buffer" problem eclectically, by collecting odd pieces from Zinoviev and Trotsky. As a "buffer", Bukharin should have de-

cided for himself just where, when and how each individual or group had made their mistake, whether it was a theoretical mistake, one of political tact, factional pronouncement, or exaggeration, etc. He should have done that and gone *hammer and tongs at every* such mistake. But he has failed to understand his task of "buffer", and here is good proof of it.

The Communist group of Tsektran's Petrograd Bureau (the C.C. of the Railwaymen's and Water Transport Workers' Union), an organisation sympathising with Trotsky, has stated its opinion that, "on the main issue of the trade unions' role in production, Comrades Trotsky and Bukharin hold views which are variations of one and the same standpoint". It has issued Comrade Bukharin's report in Petrograd on January 3, 1921, in pamphlet form (N. Bukharin, *The Tasks of the Trade Unions*, Petrograd, 1921). It says:

'Comrade Trotsky's original formulation was that the trade union leadership should be removed and suitable comrades found to take their place, etc. He had earlier advocated a 'shake-up', but he has now abandoned the idea, and it is therefore quite absurd to use it as an argument against him (p. 7)

I will let pass the numerous factual inaccuracies in this statement. (Trotsky used the term "shake-up" at the Fifth All-Russia Conference of Trade Unions, November 2-6. He mentions "selection of leadership" in Paragraph 5 of his theses which he submitted to the Central Committee on November 8, and which, incidentally, some of his supporters have published as a leaflet. The whole of Trotsky's pamphlet, *The Role and Tasks of the Trade Unions*, December 25, reveals the same kind of mentality, the same spirit as I have pointed out before. When and how he "abandoned" this attitude remains a mystery.) I am now dealing with a different matter. When the "buffer" is an eclectic, he passes over some mistakes and brings up others; he says nothing of them in Moscow on December 30, 1920, when addressing thousands of R.C.P. functionaries from all over Russia; but he brings them up in Petrograd on January 3, 1921. When the "buffer" is a dialectician, he directs the full brunt of his attack at every mistake he sees on either side, or on all sides. And that is something Bukharin does not do. He does not even try to examine Trotsky's pamphlet in the light of the "shake-up" policy. *He simply says nothing about it.* No wonder his buffer performance has made everyone laugh.

To proceed. In that same Petrograd speech he says (p. 7):

"Comrade Trotsky's mistake is insufficient support for the school-of-communism idea."

During the December 30 discussion, Bukharin reasoned as follows:



"Comrade Zinoviev has said that the trade unions are a school of communism, and Trotsky has said that they are a technical and administrative apparatus for industrial management. I see no logical grounds for proof that either proposition is wrong; both, and a combination of both, are right" (p. 48).

Bukharin and his "group" or "faction" make the same point in their thesis 6: "On the one hand, they [the trade unions] are a school of communism ... and on the other, they are—increasingly—a component part of the economic apparatus and of state administration in general" (*Pravda*, January 16).

That is where we find Comrade Bukharin's fundamental theoretical mistake, which is substitution of eclecticism (especially popular with the authors of diverse "fashionable" and reactionary philosophical systems) for Marxist dialectics.

When Comrade Bukharin speaks of "logical" grounds, his whole reasoning shows that he takes—unconsciously, perhaps—the standpoint of formal or scholastic logic, and not of dialectical or Marxist logic. Let me explain this by taking the simple example which Comrade Bukharin himself gives. In the December 30 discussion he said:

"Comrades, many of you may find that the current controversy suggests something like this: two men come in and invite each other to define the tumbler on the lectern. One says: 'It is a glass cylinder, and a curse on anyone who says different.' The other one says: 'A tumbler is a drinking vessel, and a curse on anyone who says different'" (p. 46).

The reader will see that Bukharin's example was meant to give me a popular explanation of the harm of one-track thinking. I accept it with gratitude, and in the one-good-turn-deserves-another spirit offer a popular explanation of the difference between dialectics and eclecticism.

A tumbler is assuredly both a glass cylinder and a drinking vessel. But there are more than these two properties, qualities or facets to it; there are an infinite number of them, an infinite number of "mediacies" and inter-relationships with the rest of the world. A tumbler is a heavy object which can be used as a missile; it can serve as a paper-weight, a receptacle for a captive butterfly, or a valuable object with an artistic engraving or design, and this has nothing at all to do with whether or not it can be used for drinking, is made of glass, is cylindrical or not quite, and so on and so forth.

Moreover, if I needed a tumbler just now for drinking, it would not in the least matter how cylindrical it was, and whether it was actually made of glass; what would matter though would be whether it had any holes in the bottom, or anything that would cut my lips when I drank, etc. But if I did not need a tumbler for drinking but for a purpose that could be served by any

glass cylinder, a tumbler with a cracked bottom or without one at all would do just as well, etc.

Formal logic, which is as far as schools go (and should go, with suitable abridgements for the lower forms), deals with formal definitions, draws on what is most common, or glaring, and stops there. When two or more different definitions are taken and combined at random (a glass cylinder and a drinking vessel), the result is an eclectic definition which is indicative of different facets of the object, and nothing more.

Dialectical logic demands that we should go further. Firstly, if we are to have a true knowledge of an object we must look at and examine all its facets, its connections and "mediacies". That is something we cannot ever hope to achieve completely, but the rule of comprehensiveness is a safeguard against mistakes and rigidity. Secondly, dialectical logic requires that an object should be taken in development, in change, in "self-movement" (as Hegel sometimes puts it). This is not immediately obvious in respect of such an object as a tumbler, but it, too, is in flux, and this holds especially true for its purpose, use and *connection* with the surrounding world. Thirdly, a full "definition" of an object must include the whole of human experience, both as a criterion of truth and a practical indicator of its connection with human wants. Fourthly, dialectical logic holds that "truth is always concrete, never abstract", as the late Plekhanov liked to say after Hegel. (Let me add in parenthesis for the benefit of young Party members that you *cannot* hope to become a *real*, intelligent Communist without making a study—and I mean *study*—of all of Plekhanov's philosophical writings, because nothing better has been written on Marxism anywhere in the world.\*)

I have not, of course, run through the whole notion of dialectical logic, but what I have said will do for the present. I think we can return from the tumbler to the trade unions and Trotsky's platform.

"A school, on the one hand, and an apparatus on the other", says Bukharin, and writes as much in his theses. Trotsky's mistake is "insufficient support for the school-of-communism idea"; Zinoviev errs by being lukewarm on the apparatus "factor".

\* By the way, it would be a good thing, first, if the current edition of Plekhanov's works contained a special volume or volumes of all his philosophical articles, with detailed indexes, etc., to be included in a series of standard textbooks on communism; secondly, I think the workers' state must demand that professors of philosophy should have a knowledge of Plekhanov's exposition of Marxist philosophy and ability to impart it to their students. But all that is a digression from "propaganda" to "administration".

Why is Bukharin's reasoning no more than inert and empty eclecticism? It is because he does not even try to make an independent analysis, from his own standpoint, either of the whole course of the current controversy (as Marxism, *that is*, dialectical logic, unconditionally demands) or of the whole approach to the question, the whole presentation—the whole trend of the presentation, if you will—of the question at the present time and in these concrete circumstances. You do not see Bukharin doing that at all! His approach is one of pure abstraction: he makes no attempt at concrete study, and takes bits and pieces from Zinoviev and Trotsky. That is eclecticism.

Here is another example to clarify the picture. I know next to nothing about the insurgents and revolutionaries of South China (apart from the two or three articles by Sun Yat-sen, and a few books and newspaper articles I read many years ago). Since there are these uprisings, it is not too far-fetched to assume a controversy going on between Chinese No. 1, who says that the insurrection is the product of a most acute nation-wide class struggle, and Chinese No. 2, who says that insurrection is an art. That is all I need to know in order to write theses *à la* Bukharin: "On the one hand, . . . on the other hand." The one has failed to reckon with the art "factor", and the other, with the "acuteness factor", etc. Because no *concrete* study is made of *this particular* controversy, question, approach, etc., the result is a dead and empty eclecticism.

On the one hand, the trade unions are a school, and on the other, an apparatus; but they also happen to be an organisation of working people, an almost exclusive organisation of industrial workers, an organisation by industry, etc.\* Bukharin does not make any analysis for himself, nor does he produce a shred of evidence to prove why it is that we should consider the first two "facets" of the question or object, instead of the third, the fourth, the fifth, etc. That is why his group's theses are an eclectic soap bubble. His presentation of the "school-apparatus" relationship is fundamentally eclectic and wrong.

The only way to view this question in the right light is to descend from empty abstractions to the concrete, that is, the present issue. Whether you take it in the form it assumed at the Fifth All-Russia Conference of Trade Unions, or as it was presented and *slanted* by Trotsky himself in his platform pamphlet of December 25, you will find that his *whole* approach is quite

\* Incidentally, here again Trotsky makes a mistake. He thinks that an industrial union is designed to control industry. That is wrong. When you say that a union is an industrial one you mean that it admits to membership workers in one industry, which is inevitable at the present level of technology and culture (in Russia and elsewhere).

wrong and that he has gone off at a tangent. He has failed to understand that the trade unions can and must be viewed as a school both when raising the question of "Soviet trade-unionism", and when speaking of production propaganda in general, and even when considering "coalescence" and trade union participation in industrial management, *as Trotsky does*. On this last point, as it is presented in Trotsky's platform pamphlet, the mistake lies in his failure to grasp that the trade unions are a *school of technical and administrative management of production*. In the context of the controversy, you cannot say: "a school, on the one hand, and something else on the other"; given Trotsky's approach, *the trade unions, whichever way you look at them, are a school*. They are a school of unity, solidarity, management and administration, where you learn how to protect your interests. Instead of making an effort to comprehend and correct Comrade Trotsky's fundamental mistake, Comrade Bukharin has produced a funny little amendment: "On the one hand, and on the other."

Let us go deeper into the question. Let us see what the present trade unions are, as an "apparatus" of industrial management. We have seen from the incomplete returns that about 900 workers—trade union members and delegates—are engaged in industrial management. If you multiply this number by 10 or even by 100—if it helps to clarify your fundamental mistake let us assume this incredible speed of "advance" in the immediate future—you still have an insignificant proportion of those directly engaged in *management*, as compared with the mass of six million trade union members. This makes it even clearer that it is quite wrong to look to the "leading stratum", and talk about the trade unions' role in production and industrial management, as Trotsky does, forgetting that 98.5 per cent (6 million minus 90,000 equals 5,910,000 or 98.5 per cent of the total) *are learning, and will have to continue to do so for a long time to come*. Don't say school and management, say *school of management*.

In his December 30 argument against Zinoviev, whom he accused, quite groundlessly and incorrectly, of denying the "appointments system", that is, the Central Committee's right and duty to make appointments, Comrade Trotsky inadvertently drew the following telltale comparison:

'Zinoviev tends to overdo the propaganda angle on every practical matter, forgetting that it is not only a source of material for agitation, but also a problem requiring an administrative solution" (p. 27).

Before I explain in detail the *potential* administrative approach to the issue, let me say that Comrade Trotsky's funda-

mental mistake is that he treats (rather, maltreats) *the questions* he himself had brought up in his platform pamphlet as *administrative* ones, whereas *they* could be and ought to be viewed *only from the propaganda angle*.

In effect, what are Trotsky's good points? One undoubtedly good and useful point is his *production propaganda*, but that is not in his theses, but in his *speeches*, specially when he forgets about his unfortunate polemics with the allegedly "conservative" wing of the trade-unionists. He would undoubtedly have done (and I believe he will do) a great deal of good in the trade union commission's practical business, as speaker and writer, and as a member of the All-Russia Production Propaganda Bureau. His platform theses were a mistake, for through them, like a scarlet thread, runs the administrative approach to the "crisis" and the "two trends" within the trade unions, the interpretation of the R.C.P. Programme, "Soviet trade-unionism", "production training" and "coalescence". I have listed all the main points of Trotsky's "platform" and they all happen to be topics which, considering the material at Trotsky's disposal, can be correctly approached at the present time only from the propaganda angle.

The state is a sphere of coercion. It would be madness to renounce coercion, especially in the epoch of the dictatorship of the proletariat, so that the administrative approach and "steering" are indispensable. The Party is the leader, the vanguard of the proletariat, which rules directly. It is not coercion but expulsion from the Party that is the specific means of influence and the means of purging and steeling the vanguard. The trade unions are a reservoir of the state power, a school of communism and a school of management. The specific and cardinal thing in this sphere is *not* administration but the "ties" "between the central state administration" (and, of course, the local as well), "the national economy and the *broad masses* of the working people" (see Party Programme, economic section, § 5, dealing with the trade unions).

The whole of Trotsky's platform pamphlet betrays an incorrect approach to the problem and a misunderstanding of this relationship.

Let us assume that Trotsky had taken a different approach to this famous question of "coalescence" in connection with the other topics of his platform, and that his pamphlet was entirely devoted to a detailed investigation of, say, 90 of the 900 cases of "coalescence" where trade union officials and members concurrently held elective trade union posts and Supreme Economic Council posts in industrial management. Let us say these 90 cases had been analysed together with the returns of a selective statistical survey, the reports of inspectors and instructors of Rabkrin<sup>205</sup>

and the People's Commissariats concerned: let us say they had been analysed in the light of the data supplied by the administrative bodies, the results of the work, the headway in production, etc. That would have been a correct administrative approach, and would have fully vindicated the "shake-up" line, which implies concentrating attention on removals, transfers, appointments and the immediate demands to be made on the "leading stratum". When Bukharin said in his January 3 speech, published by the Tsektran people in Petrograd, that Trotsky had at first wanted a "shake-up" but had now abandoned the idea, he made another one of his eclectic mistakes, which is ridiculous from the practical standpoint and theoretically inadmissible for a Marxist. He takes the question in the abstract, being unable (or unwilling) to get down to brass tacks. So long as we, the Party's Central Committee and the whole Party, continue to run things, that is, govern, we shall never—we cannot—dispense with the "shake-up", that is, removals, transfers, appointments, dismissals, etc. But Trotsky's platform pamphlet deals with something else, and does not raise the "question of practical business" at all. It is not this but the "*trends* within the trade union movement" (Trotsky's thesis 4, end) that was being debated by Zinoviev and Trotsky, Bukharin and myself, and in fact the whole Party.

This is essentially a political question. Because of the substance of the case—this concrete, particular "case"—it is impossible to correct Trotsky's mistake by means of eclectic little amendments and addenda, as Bukharin has been trying to do, being moved undoubtedly by the most humane sentiments and intentions.

There is only one answer.

First, there must be a correct solution of the political question of the "trends within the trade union movement", the relationship between classes, between politics and economics, the specific role of the state, the Party, the trade unions, as "school" and apparatus, etc.

Second, once the correct political decision has been adopted, a diversified nation-wide production propaganda campaign must be carried through, or, rather, systematically carried forward with persistence and patience over a long term, under the sponsorship and direction of a state agency. It should be conducted in such a way as to cover the same ground over and over again.

Third, the "questions of practical business" must not be confused with trend issues which properly belong to the sphere of "general Party talk" and broad discussions; they must be dealt with as practical matters in the working commissions, with a hearing of witnesses and a study of memoranda, reports and

statistics. And any necessary "shake-up" must be carried out only on that basis and in those circumstances: only under a decision of the competent Soviet or Party organ, or of both.

Trotsky and Bukharin have produced a hodgepodge of political mistakes in approach, breaks in the middle of the transmission belts, and unwarranted and futile attacks on "administrative steerage". It is now clear where the "theoretical" source of the mistake lies, since Bukharin has taken up that aspect of it with his example of the tumbler. His theoretical—in this case, gnosiological—mistake lies in his substitution of eclecticism for dialectics. His eclectic approach has confused him and has landed him in syndicalism. Trotsky's mistake is one-track thinking, compulsiveness, exaggeration and obstinacy. His platform says that a tumbler is a drinking vessel, but this particular tumbler happens to have no bottom.

## CONCLUSION

It remains for me to go over a few more points which must be dealt with to prevent misunderstanding.

Thesis 6 of Trotsky's platform quotes Paragraph 5 of the economic section of the R.C.P. Programme, which deals with the trade unions. Two pages later, his thesis 8 says:

"Having lost the old basis of their existence, the class economic struggle, the trade unions..." (that is wrong, and is a hasty exaggeration: the trade unions no longer have to face the *class* economic struggle but the *non-class* "economic struggle", which means combating bureaucratic distortions of the Soviet apparatus, safeguarding the working people's material and spiritual interests in ways and means inaccessible to this apparatus, etc. This is a struggle they will unfortunately have to face for many more years to come). "The trade unions," says Trotsky, "have, for various reasons, not yet succeeded in mustering the necessary forces and working out the necessary methods enabling them to solve the new task, that of *organising production*" (Trotsky's italics, p. 9, thesis 8), "set before them by the proletarian revolution and formulated in our Programme."

That is yet another hasty exaggeration which is pregnant with grave error. The Programme does not contain any such formulation nor does it set the trade unions the task of "organising production". Let us go over the propositions in the Party's Programme as they unfold in the text:

(1) "The organisational apparatus" (but not the others) "of socialised industry should rely chiefly" (but not exclusively) "on the trade unions." (2) "They must to an ever increasing

degree divest themselves of the narrow craft-union spirit" (how? under the leadership of the Party and through the proletariat's educational and other influence on the non-proletarian mass of working people) "and become large industrial associations, embracing the majority, and eventually all of the workers in the given industry."

That is the first part of the section of the Party Programme dealing with the trade unions. You will have noted that it starts by laying down very "*strict* conditions" demanding a long sustained effort for what is to follow. And what follows is this:

"The trade unions being, on the strength of the laws of the Soviet Republic and established practice, participants" (note the cautious statement: participants only) "in all the local and central organs of industrial management, should eventually arrive at a *de facto* concentration in their hands of the whole administration of the whole national economy, as a single economic entity" (note this: should arrive at a *de facto* concentration of management not of branches of industry and not of industry as a whole, but of the whole national economy, and moreover, as an economic entity. In economic terms, this condition may be considered fulfilled only when the petty producers both in industry and agriculture account for less than one-half of the population and the national economy). "The trade unions ensuring in this way" (the way which helps to realise all the conditions listed earlier) "indissoluble ties between the central state administration, the national economy and the broad masses of working people, should draw the latter" (that is, the masses, the majority of the population) "into direct economic management on the widest possible scale. At the same time, the participation of the trade unions in economic management and their activity in drawing the broad masses into this work are the principal means of combating the bureaucratisation of the economic apparatus of the Soviet power and making possible the establishment of truly popular control over the results of production."

There again, in that last sentence, we find a very cautious phrase: "participation in economic management"; and another reference to the recruitment of the broad masses as the chief (but not the only) means of combating bureaucratic practices; finally, we find a highly cautious statement: "*making possible*" the establishment of "*popular*"—that is, workers' and peasants', and not just purely proletarian—"control".

It is obviously wrong to boil this down to the Party Programme "formulating" the trade unions' task as "organisation of production". And if you insist on this error, and write it into your platform theses, you will get nothing but an anti-communist, syndicalist deviation.



Incidentally, Comrade Trotsky says in his theses that "over the last period we have not made any headway towards the goal set forth in the Programme but have in fact retreated from it" (p. 7, thesis 6). That statement is unsupported, and, I think, wrong. It is no proof to say, as Trotsky did in the discussions, that the trade unions "themselves" admit this. That is not the last resort, as far as the Party is concerned, and, generally speaking, the proof lies only in a serious and objective study of a great number of facts. Moreover, even if such proof were forthcoming, there would remain this question: Why have we retreated? Is it because "many trade-unionists" are "balking at the new tasks and methods", as Trotsky believes, or because "we have not yet succeeded in mustering the necessary forces and working out the necessary methods" to cut short and correct certain unwarranted and harmful excesses of bureaucracy?

Which brings me to Bukharin's rebuke of December 30 (repeated by Trotsky yesterday, January 24, during our discussion in the Communist group of the Second Miners' Congress<sup>206</sup>) that we have "dropped the line laid down by the Ninth Party Congress" (p. 46 of the report on the December 30 discussion). He alleged that at that Congress I had defended the militarisation of labour and had jeered at references to democracy, all of which I now "repudiate". In his reply to the debate on December 30, Comrade Trotsky added this barb: "Lenin takes account of the fact that . . . there is a grouping of opposition-minded comrades within the trade unions" (p. 65); that I view it from the "diplomatic angle" (p. 69), and that there is "manoeuvring inside the Party groups" (p. 70), etc. Putting such a complexion on the case is, of course, highly flattering for Trotsky, and worse than unflattering for me. But let us look at the facts.

In that same discussion on December 30, Trotsky and Krestinsky established the fact that "as long ago as July (1920), Comrade Preobrazhensky had proposed to the Central Committee that we should switch to a new track in respect of the internal life of our workers' organisations" (p. 25). In August, Comrade Zinoviev drafted a letter, and the Central Committee approved a C.C. letter on combating red-tape and extending democracy. In September, the question was brought up at a Party conference whose decisions were endorsed by the Central Committee. In December, the question of combating red-tape was laid before the Eighth Congress of Soviets. Consequently, the whole Central Committee, the whole Party and the whole workers' and peasants' Republic had recognised that the question of the bureaucracy and ways of combating its evils was high on the agenda. Does any "repudiation" of the Ninth Congress of the R.C.P. follow from all this? Of course, not. The decisions on the militarisation

of labour, etc., are incontestable, and there is no need for me at all to withdraw any of my jibes at the references to democracy by those who challenged these decisions. What does follow is that we shall be extending democracy in the workers' organisations, without turning it into a fetish; that we shall redouble our attention to the struggle against bureaucratic practices; and that we shall take special care to rectify any unwarranted and harmful excesses of bureaucracy, no matter who points them out.

One final remark on the minor question of priority and equalisation. I said during the December 30 discussion that Trotsky's formulation of thesis 41 on this point was theoretically wrong, because it implied priority in production and equalisation in consumption. I replied that priority implied preference and that that was nothing unless you also had it in consumption. Comrade Trotsky reproached me for "extraordinary forgetfulness" and "intimidation" (pp. 67 and 68), and I am surprised to find that he has not accused me also of manoeuvring, diplomatic moves, etc. He has made "concessions" to my equalitarian line, but I have attacked him.

Actually, however, anyone who takes an interest in Party affairs, can turn to indisputable Party documents: the November resolution of the C.C. Plenum, point 4, and Trotsky's platform pamphlet, thesis 41. However "forgetful" I may be, and however excellent Comrade Trotsky's memory, it is still a fact that thesis 41 contains a theoretical error, which the C.C. resolution of November 9 does not. The resolution says: "While recognising the necessity of keeping to the principle of priority in carrying out the economic plan, the Central Committee, in complete solidarity with the decisions of the last All-Russia Conference (September), deems it necessary to effect a gradual but steady transition to equality in the status of various groups of workers and their respective trade unions, all the while building up the organisation on the scale of the union as a whole." That is clearly aimed against Tsektran, and it is quite impossible to put any other construction on the exact meaning of the resolution. Priority is here to stay. Preference is still to be given to enterprises, trade unions, trusts and departments on the priority list (in regard to fulfilment of the economic plan), but at the same time, the "equalitarian line"—which was supported not by "Comrade Lenin alone", but was approved by the Party Conference and the Central Committee, that is, the entire Party—makes this clear-cut demand: get on with the gradual but steady transition to equalisation. That Tsektran failed to carry out this C.C. resolution (November) is evident from the Central Committee's December resolution (on Trotsky and Bukharin's motion), which contains another reminder of the "principles of ordinary democracy".

The theoretical error in thesis 41 is that it says: *equalisation in consumption, priority in production*. That is an economic absurdity because it implies a gap between production and consumption. I did not say—and could never have said—anything of the sort. If you don't need a factory, close it down. Close down all the factories that are not absolutely essential, and give preference to those that are. Give preference to, say, transport. Most certainly. But the preference must not be overdone, as it was in Tsektran's case, which was why the *Party* (and not just Lenin) issued this directive: *get on with the gradual but steady transition to equality*. And Trotsky has no one but himself to blame for having come out—after the November Plenary Meeting, which gave a clear-cut and theoretically correct solution—with a factional pamphlet on “the two trends” and proposed a formulation in his thesis 41 which is wrong in economic terms.

Today, January 25, it is exactly one month since Comrade Trotsky's factional statement. It is now patent that this pronouncement, inappropriate in form and wrong in essence, has diverted the Party from its practical economic and production effort into rectifying political and theoretical mistakes. But, it's an ill wind, as the old saying goes.

Rumour has it that some terrible things have been said about the disagreements on the Central Committee. Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries undoubtedly shelter (and have sheltered) behind the opposition, and it is they who are spreading the rumours, incredibly malicious formulations, and inventions of all sorts to malign the Party, put vile interpretations on its decisions, aggravate conflicts and ruin its work. That is a political trick used by the bourgeoisie, including the petty-bourgeois democrats, the Mensheviks and the Socialist-Revolutionaries, who, for very obvious reasons, hate—and cannot help hating—the Bolsheviks' guts. Every intelligent member of the Party is familiar with this political trick, and knows its worth.

Because of the disagreements on the Central Committee, it had to appeal to the Party, and the discussions that followed clearly revealed the essence and scope of these disagreements. That killed the rumours and the slander. The Party learns its lessons and is tempered in the struggle against factionalism, a new malaise (it is new in the sense that after the October Revolution we had forgotten all about it). Actually, it is an old malaise, with relapses apparently bound to occur over the next few years, but with an easier cure now well in sight.

The Party is learning not to blow up its disagreements. Let me quote at this point Comrade Trotsky's correct remark about

Comrade Tomskey. 'I have always said—even when the polemic against Comrade Tomskey was at its bitterest—that it is quite clear to me that only men with his experience and authority ought to be our trade union leaders. I told this to the Party group of the Fifth Conference of the Trade Unions, and repeated it at the Zimin theatre a few days ago. Ideological struggle within the Party does not mean mutual ostracism but mutual influence' (p. 34 of the report on the December 30 discussion). The Party will naturally apply this correct approach to Comrade Tomskey himself.

During the discussion it was Comrade Shlyapnikov and his group, the so-called Workers' Opposition<sup>208</sup> who showed the most pronounced syndicalist trend. This being an obvious deviation from communism and the Party, we shall have to reckon with it, talk it over and make a special propaganda effort to explain the error of these views and the danger of making such mistakes. Comrade Bukharin who actually coined the syndicalist phrase 'mandatory nominations' (by trade unions to management bodies) tries to vindicate himself in today's issue of *Pravda* but I'm afraid his line of defence is highly ineffective and quite wrong. He wants us to know—on second thought he deals with the role of the Party in his other points. I should think so! If it were otherwise it would have been more than just a *mistake* requiring correction and allowing some slight rectification: it would have been withdrawal from the Party. When you say 'mandatory nominations' but neglect to add there and then that they are *not* mandatory for the Party, you have a syndicalist deviation and that is *incompatible* with communism and the Party Programme. If you add 'mandatory but *not* for the Party' you are giving the non-Party workers a false sense of having some increase in their rights, whereas in fact there will be no change at all. The longer Comrade Bukharin persists in his deviation from communism—a deviation that is wrong, theoretically and deceptive politically—the more deplorable will be the fruits of his obstinacy. You cannot maintain an untenable proposition. The Party does not object to the extension of the rights of the non-Party workers in general but a little reflection will show what can and what cannot be done in this respect.

In the discussion by the Communist group of the Second All-Russia Miners' Congress, Shlyapnikov's platform was defeated despite the backing it got from Comrade Kiselev, who commands special prestige in that union: our platform won 137 votes, Shlyapnikov's, 62, and Tomskey's, 5. The syndicalist malaise must and will be cured.

In this one month Petrograd, Moscow and a number of provincial towns have shown that the Party responded to the dis-

cussion and has rejected Comrade Trotsky's wrong line by an overwhelming majority. While there may have been some vacillation "at the top" and "in the provinces", in the committees and in the offices, the rank-and-file membership—the mass of Party workers—came out solidly against this wrong line.

Comrade Kamenev informed me of Comrade Trotsky's announcement, during the discussion in the Zamoskvorechye District of Moscow on January 23, that he was withdrawing his platform and joining up with the Bukharin group on a new platform. Unfortunately, I heard nothing of this from Comrade Trotsky either on January 23 or 24, when he spoke against me in the Communist group of the Miners' Congress. I don't know whether this is due to another change in Comrade Trotsky's platform and intentions, or to some other reason. In any case, his January 23 announcement shows that the Party, without so much as mustering all its forces, and with only Petrograd, Moscow and a minority of the provincial towns going on record, has corrected Comrade Trotsky's mistake promptly and with determination.

The Party's enemies had rejoiced too soon. They have not been able—and will never be able—to take advantage of some of the inevitable disagreements within the Party to inflict harm on it and on the dictatorship of the proletariat in Russia.

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## INTEGRATED ECONOMIC PLAN

What is being said and written on this subject leaves a very painful impression. Take I. Kritsman's articles in *Ekonomicheskaya Zhizn*<sup>209</sup> (I—December 14, 1920; II—December 23; III—February 9; IV—February 16; and V—February 20). There is nothing there but empty talk and word-spinning, a refusal to consider and look into what has been done in this field. Five long articles of reflection on how to approach the study of facts and data, instead of any actual examination of them.

Take Milyutin's theses (*Ekonomicheskaya Zhizn*, February 19), or Larin's (*ibid.*, February 20); listen to the speeches of "responsible" comrades: they all have the same basic defects as Kritsman's articles. They all reveal the dulllest sort of scholasticism, including a lot of twaddle about the law of concatenation, etc. It is a scholasticism that ranges from the literary to the bureaucratic, to the exclusion of all practical effort.

But what is even worse is the highbrow bureaucratic disdain for the vital work that has been done and that needs to be continued. Again and again there is the emptiest "drawing up of theses" and a concoction of plans and slogans, in place of painstaking and thoughtful study of our own practical experience.

The only serious work on the subject is the *Plan for the Electrification of the R.S.F.S.R.*, the report of GOELRO (the State Commission for the Electrification of Russia) to the Eighth Congress of Soviets, published in December 1920 and distributed at the Congress. It outlines an integrated economic plan which has been worked out—only as a rough approximation, of course—by the best brains in the Republic on the instructions of its highest bodies. We have to make a very modest start in fighting the complacency born of the ignorance of the grandees, and the

intellectualist conceit of the Communist literati, by telling the story of this book, and describing its content and significance.

More than a year ago—February 2-7, 1920—the All-Russia Central Executive Committee met in session and adopted a resolution on electrification which says:

"Along with the most immediate, vital and urgent tasks in organising transport, coping with the fuel and food crises, fighting epidemics, and forming disciplined labour armies, Soviet Russia now has, for the first time, an opportunity of starting on more balanced economic development, and working out a nation-wide state economic plan on scientific lines and consistently implementing it. In view of the prime importance of electrification . . . mindful of the importance of electrification for industry, agriculture and transport . . . and so on and so forth . . . the Committee resolves: to authorise the Supreme Economic Council to work out, in conjunction with the People's Commissariat for Agriculture, a project for the construction of a system of electric power stations . . ."

This seems to be clear enough, doesn't it? "A nation-wide state economic plan on scientific lines": is it possible to misread these words in the decision adopted by our highest authority? If the literati and the grandees, who boast of their communism before the "experts", are ignorant of this decision it remains for us to remind them that ignorance of our laws is no argument.

In pursuance of the All-Russia C.E.C. resolution, the Presidium of the Supreme Economic Council, on February 21, 1920, confirmed the Electrification Commission set up under the Electricity Department, after which the Council of Defence endorsed the statute on GOELRO, whose composition the Supreme Economic Council was instructed to determine and confirm by agreement with the People's Commissariat for Agriculture. On April 24, 1920, GOELRO issued its *Bulletin* No. 1, containing a detailed programme of works and a list of the responsible persons, scientists, engineers, agronomists and statisticians on the several subcommissions to direct operations in the various areas, together with the specific assignments each had undertaken. The list of persons and their assignments runs to ten printed pages of *Bulletin* No. 1. The best talent available to the Supreme Economic Council, the People's Commissariat for Agriculture and the People's Commissariat for Communications has been recruited.

The GOELRO effort has produced this voluminous—and first-class—scientific publication. Over 180 specialists worked on it. There are more than 200 items on the list of works they have submitted to GOELRO. We find, first, a summary of these works (the first part of the volume, running to over 200 pages): a) electrification and a state economic plan; followed by b) fuel supply (with a detailed "fuel budget" for the R.S.F.S.R. *over the next ten years*, with an estimate of the manpower required); c) water power; d) agriculture; e) transport; and f) industry

The plan ranges over about ten years and gives an indication of the number of workers and capacities (in 1,000 hp). Of course, it is only a rough draft, with possible errors, and a "rough approximation", but it is a real scientific plan. We have precise calculations by experts for every major item, and every industry. To give a small example, we have their calculations for the output of leather, footwear at two pairs a head (300 million pairs), etc. As a result, we have a material and a financial (gold rubles) balance-sheet for electrification (about 370 million working days, so many barrels of cement, so many bricks, poods of iron, copper, and other things; turbine generator capacities, etc.). It envisages ("at a very rough estimate") an 80 per cent increase in manufacturing, and 80-100 per cent, in extracting industry over the next ten years. The gold balance deficit (+11,000 million —17,000 million leaves a total deficit of about 6,000 million) "can be covered by means of concessions and credit operations".

It gives the site of the first 20 steam and 10 water power district electric stations, and a detailed description of the economic importance of each.

The general summary is followed, in the same volume, by a list of works for each area (with a separate paging): Northern, Central Industrial (both of which are especially well set out in precise detail based on a wealth of scientific data), Southern, Volga, Urals, Caucasian (the Caucasus is taken as a whole in anticipation of an economic agreement between its various republics), Western Siberia and Turkestan. For each of the areas, electric power capacities are projected beyond the first units; this is followed by the "GOELRO Programme A", that is, the plan for the use of *existing* electric power stations on the most rational and economic lines. Here is another small example: it is estimated that a grid of the Petrograd stations (Northern Area) could yield the following economy (p. 69): up to one-half of the capacities could be diverted to the logging areas of the North, such as Murmansk and Archangel, etc. The resulting increase in the output and export of timber could yield "*up to 500 million rubles' worth of foreign exchange a year in the immediate period ahead*".

"Annual receipts from the sale of our northern timber could very well equal our gold reserves over the next few years" (ibid., p. 70). provided, of course, we stop talking about plans and start studying and *applying* the plan already worked out by our scientists.

Let me add that we have an embryonic calendar programme for a number of other items (though not for all, of course). This is more than a general plan: it is an estimate for each year, from 1921 to 1930, of the number of stations that can be run in, and



the proportions to which the existing ones can be enlarged, provided again we start doing what I have just said, which is not easy in view of the ways of our intellectualist literati and bureaucratic grandees.

A look at Germany will bring out the dimensions and value of GOELRO's effort. Over there, the scientist Ballod produced a similar work: he compiled a scientific plan for the socialist reconstruction of the whole national economy of Germany.<sup>210</sup> But his being a capitalist country, the plan never got off the ground. It remains a lone-wolf effort, and an exercise in literary composition. With us over here it was a state assignment, mobilising hundreds of specialists and producing an integrated economic plan on scientific lines within 10 months (and not two, of course, as we had originally planned). We have every right to be proud of this work, and it remains for us to *understand how* it should be used. What we now have to contend with is failure to *understand this fact*.

The resolution of the Eighth Congress of Soviets says: "The Congress . . . *approves the work of the Supreme Economic Council, etc., especially that of GOELRO in drawing up the plan for the electrification of Russia . . . regards this plan as the first step in a great economic endeavour, authorises the All-Russia Central Executive Committee, etc., to put the finishing touches to the plan and to endorse it, at the very earliest date. . . . It authorises the adoption of all measures for the most extensive popularisation of this plan. . . . A study of this plan must be an item in the curricula of all educational establishments of the Republic, without exception*",<sup>211</sup> etc.

The bureaucratic and intellectualist defects of our apparatus, especially of its top drawer, are most glaringly revealed by the attitude to this resolution taken by some people in Moscow and their efforts to twist it, to the extent of ignoring it altogether. Instead of advertising the plan, the literati produce theses and empty disquisitions on how to start working out a plan. The grandees, in purely bureaucratic fashion, lay stress on the need to "approve" the plan, by which they do not mean concrete assignments (the dates for the construction of the various installations, the purchase of various items abroad, etc.) but some muddled idea, such as working out a *new* plan. The misunderstanding this produces is monstrous, and there is talk of partially restoring the old before getting on with the new. Electrification, it is said, is something of an "electrofiction". Why not gasification, we are asked; GOELRO, they also say, is full of bourgeois specialists, with only a handful of Communists; GOELRO should provide the cadre of experts, instead of staffing the general planning commission, and so forth.

The danger lies in this discord, for it betrays an inability to work, and the prevalence of intellectualist and bureaucratic complacency, to the exclusion of all real effort. The conceited ignoramus is betrayed by his jibes at the "fantastic" plan, his questions about gasification, etc. The nerve of their trying, offhand, to pick holes in something it took an army of first-class specialists to produce! Isn't it a shame to try to shrug it off with trite little jokes, and to put on airs about one's right "to withhold approval"?

It is time we learned to put a value on science and got rid of the "communist" conceit of the dabbler and the bureaucrat; it is time we learned to work systematically, making use of our own experience and practice.

Of course, "plans" naturally give rise to endless argument and discussion, but when the task is to get down to the study of the only scientific plan before us, we should not allow ourselves to engage in general statements and debates about underlying "principles". We should get down to correcting it on the strength of *practical* experience and a more detailed study. Of course, the grandees always retain the right to "give or withhold approval". A sober view of this right, and a reasonable reading of the resolution of the Eighth Congress concerning the approval of the plan, which it endorsed and handed down to us for the broadest popularisation, show that approval must be taken to mean the placing of a series of orders and the issue of a set of instructions, such as the items to be purchased, the building to be started, the materials to be collected and forwarded, etc. Upon the other hand, "approval" from the bureaucratic standpoint means arbitrary acts on the part of the grandees, the red-tape runaround, the commissions-of-inquiry game, and the strictly bureaucratic foul-up of anything that is going

Let us look at the matter from yet another angle. There is a special need to tie in the scientific plan for electrification with existing short-term plans and their actual implementation. That this must be done is naturally beyond doubt. But how is it to be done? To find out, the economists, the literati, and the statisticians should stop their twaddle about the plan in general, and get on with a detailed study of the implementation of our plans, our mistakes in this practical business, and ways of correcting them. Otherwise we shall have to grope our way long. Over and above such a study of our practical experience, there remains the very small matter of administrative technique. Of planning commissions we have more than enough. Take two men from the department under Ivan Ivanovich and integrate them with one from the department under Pavel Pavlovich, or vice versa. Link them up with a subcommission of the general planning commis-

sion. All of which boils down to administrative technique. Various combinations should be tried out, and the best selected. That is elementary.

The whole point is that we have yet to learn the art of approach, and stop substituting intellectualist and bureaucratic projecteering for vibrant effort. We have, and have had, short-term food and fuel plans, and there are glaring mistakes in both. That is unquestionable. But the efficient economist, instead of penning empty theses, will get down to a study of the facts and figures, and analyse our own practical experience. He will pin-point the mistakes and suggest a remedy. This kind of study will suggest to the efficient administrator the transfers, alterations of records, recasting of the machinery, etc. to be proposed or put through. You don't find us doing anything of the sort.

The main flaw is in the wrong approach to the relationships between the Communists and the specialists, the administrators and the scientists and writers. There is no doubt at all that some aspects of the integrated economic plan, as of any other undertaking, call for the administrative approach or for decisions by Communists alone. Let me add that new aspects of that kind can always come to the fore. That, however, is the purely abstract way of looking at it. Right now, our communist writers and administrators are taking quite the wrong approach, because they have failed to realise that in this case we should be learning all we can from the bourgeois specialists and scientists, and cutting out the administrative game. GOELRO's is the only integrated economic plan we can hope to have just now. It should be amplified, elaborated, corrected and applied in the light of well scrutinised practical experience. The opposite view boils down to the purely "pseudo-radical conceit, which in actual fact is nothing but ignorance", as our Party Programme puts it.<sup>212</sup> Ignorance and conceit are equally betrayed by the view that we can have another general planning commission in the R.S.F.S.R. in addition to GOELRO, which, of course, is not to deny that some advantage may be gained from partial and business-like changes in its membership. It is only on this basis—by continuing what has been started—that we can hope to make any serious improvements in the general economic plan; any other course will involve us in an administrative game, or high-handed action, to put it bluntly. The task of the Communists inside GOELRO is to issue fewer orders, rather, to refrain from issuing any at all, and to be very tactful in their dealings with the scientists and technicians (the R.C.P. Programme says: "Most of them inevitably have strong bourgeois habits and take the bourgeois view of things"). The task is to learn from them and to help them to broaden their world-view on the basis of achievements in their

particular field, always bearing in mind that the engineer's way to communism is *different* from that of the underground propagandist and the writer; he is guided along *by the evidence of his own science*, so that the agronomist, the forestry expert, etc., each have *their own path* to tread towards communism. The Communist who has failed to prove his ability to bring together and guide the work of specialists in a spirit of modesty, going to the heart of the matter and studying it in detail, is a potential menace. We have many such Communists among us, and I would gladly swap dozens of them for one conscientious qualified bourgeois specialist.

There are two ways in which Communists outside GOELRO can help to establish and implement the integrated economic plan. Those of them who are economists, statisticians or writers should start by making a study of our own practical experience, and suggest corrections and improvements only after such a detailed study of the facts. Research is the business of the scientist, and once again, because we are no longer dealing with general principles, but with practical experience, we find that we can obtain much more benefit from a "specialist in science and technology", even if a bourgeois one, than from the conceited Communist who is prepared, at a moment's notice, to write "theses", issue "slogans" and produce meaningless abstractions. What we need is more factual knowledge and fewer debates on ostensible communist principles.

Upon the other hand, the Communist administrator's prime duty is to see that he is not carried away by the issuing of orders. He must learn to start by looking at the achievements of science, insisting on a verification of the facts and locating and studying the mistakes (through reports, articles in the press, meetings, etc.), before proceeding with any corrections. We need more practical studies of our mistakes, in place of the Tit Litch type of tactics ("I might give my approval, if I feel like it").

Men's vices it has long been known, are for the most part bound up with their virtues. This, in fact, applies to many leading Communists. For decades, we had been working for the great cause, preaching the overthrow of the bourgeoisie, teaching men to mistrust the bourgeois specialists, to expose them, deprive them of power and crush their resistance. That is a historic cause of world-wide significance. But it needs only a slight exaggeration to prove the old adage that there is only one step from the sublime to the ridiculous. Now that we have convinced Russia, now that we have wrested Russia from the exploiters and given her to the working people, now that we have crushed the exploiters, we must learn to run the country. This calls for modesty and

respect for the efficient "specialists in science and technology", and a business-like and careful analysis of our numerous *practical* mistakes, and their gradual but steady correction. Let us have less of this intellectualist and bureaucratic complacency, and a deeper scrutiny of the practical experience being gained in the centre and in the localities, and of the available achievements of science.

February 21, 1921

*Pravda* No. 39, February 22, 1921  
Signed: *N. Lenin*

*Collected Works*, Vol 32,  
pp. 137-45

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# TENTH CONGRESS OF THE R.C.P.(B.)

MARCH 8-16, 1921

## 1

### SPEECH AT THE OPENING OF THE CONGRESS MARCH 8

(*Prolonged applause.*) Comrades, allow me to declare the Tenth Congress of the Russian Communist Party open. We have passed through a very eventful year both in international and in our own internal history. To begin with the international situation, let me say that this is the first time we have met in conditions in which the Communist International has ceased to be a mere slogan and has really been converted into a mighty organisation with foundations—real foundations—in the major advanced capitalist countries. What had only been a set of resolutions at the Second Congress of the Communist International has been successfully implemented during the past year and has found expression, confirmation and consolidation in such countries as Germany, France and Italy. It is enough to name these three countries to show that the Communist International, since its Second Congress in Moscow last summer, has become part and parcel of the working-class movement in all the major advanced countries of Europe—more than that, it has become the chief factor in international politics. This is such a great achievement, comrades, that however difficult and severe the various trials ahead of us—and we cannot and must not lose sight of them—no one can deprive us of it!

Furthermore, comrades, this is the first congress that is meeting without any hostile troops, supported by the capitalists and imperialists of the world, on the territory of the Soviet Republic. The Red Army's victories over the past year have enabled us to open a Party Congress in such conditions for the first time. Three and a half years of unparalled struggle, and the last of the hostile armies has been driven from our territory—that is our achievement! Of course, that has not won us everything, not by a long shot; nor have we won all that we have to—real freedom from imperialist invasion and intervention. On the contrary,

their warfare against us has taken a form that is less military but is in some respects more severe and more dangerous. The transition from war to peace—which we hailed at the last Party Congress and in the light of which we have tried to organise our work—is still far from completed. Our Party is still confronted with incredibly difficult tasks, not only in respect of the economic plan—where we have made quite a few mistakes—or the basis of economic construction, but also the basis of relations between the classes remaining in our society, in this Soviet Republic. These relations have undergone a change, and this—you will all agree—should be one of the chief questions for you to examine and decide here.

Comrades, we have passed through an exceptional year, we have allowed ourselves the luxury of discussions and disputes within the Party. This was an amazing luxury for a Party shouldering unprecedented responsibilities and surrounded by mighty and powerful enemies uniting the whole capitalist world.

I do not know how you will assess that fact now. Was it fully compatible with our resources, both material and spiritual? It is up to you to appraise this. At all events, however, I must say that the slogan, task and aim which we should set ourselves at this Congress and which we must accomplish at all costs, is to emerge from the discussions and disputes stronger than before. (*Applause.*) You, comrades, cannot fail to be aware that all our enemies—and their name is legion—in all their innumerable press organs abroad repeat, elaborate and multiply the same wild rumour that our bourgeois and petty-bourgeois enemies spread here inside the Soviet Republic, namely: discussion means disputes; disputes mean discord; discord means that the Communists have become weak; press hard, seize the opportunity, take advantage of their weakening! This has become the slogan of the hostile world. We must not forget this for a moment. Our task now is to show that, to whatever extent we have allowed ourselves this luxury in the past, whether rightly or wrongly, we must emerge from this situation in such a way that, having properly examined the extraordinary abundance of platforms, shades, slight shades and almost slight shades of opinion, that have been formulated and discussed, we at our Party Congress could say to ourselves: at all events, whatever form the discussion has taken up to now, however much we have argued among ourselves—and we are confronted with so many enemies—the task of the dictatorship of the proletariat in a peasant country is so vast and difficult that formal cohesion is far from enough. (Your presence here at the Congress is a sign that we have that much.) Our efforts should be more united and harmonious than ever before; there should not be the slightest trace of factionalism—whatever its mani-

festations in the past. That we must not have on any account. That is the only condition on which we shall accomplish the immense tasks that confront us. I am sure that I express the intention and firm resolve of all of you when I say: at all events, the end of this Congress must find our Party stronger, more harmonious, and more sincerely united than ever before. (*Applause.*)

*Pravda* No. 52,  
March 9, 1921

2  
**REPORT ON THE SUBSTITUTION  
OF A TAX IN KIND FOR THE SURPLUS-GRAIN  
APPROPRIATION SYSTEM  
MARCH 15**

Comrades, the question of substituting a tax for surplus-grain appropriation is primarily and mainly a political question, for it is essentially a question of the attitude of the working class to the peasantry. We are raising it because we must subject the relations of these two main classes, whose struggle or agreement determines the fate of our revolution as a whole, to a new one. I should perhaps say, a more careful and correct re-examination and some revision. There is no need for me to dwell in detail on the reasons for it. You all know very well of course what totality of causes, especially those due to the extreme want arising out of the war, ruin, demobilisation, and the disastrous crop failure—you know about the totality of circumstances that has made the condition of the peasantry especially precarious and critical and was bound to increase its swing from the proletariat to the bourgeoisie.

A word or two on the theoretical significance of, or the theoretical approach to, this issue. There is no doubt that in a country where the overwhelming majority of the population consists of small agricultural producers, a socialist revolution can be carried out only through the implementation of a whole series of special transitional measures which would be superfluous in highly developed capitalist countries where wage-workers in industry and agriculture make up the vast majority. Highly developed capitalist countries have a class of agricultural wage-workers that has taken shape over many decades. Only such a class can socially, economically, and politically support a direct transition to socialism. Only in countries where this class is sufficiently



*developed is it possible to pass directly from capitalism to socialism, without any special country-wide transitional measures. We have stressed in a good many written works, in all our public utterances, and all our statements in the press, that this is not the case in Russia, for here industrial workers are a minority and petty farmers are the vast majority. In such a country, the socialist revolution can triumph only on two conditions. First, if it is given timely support by a socialist revolution in one or several advanced countries. As you know, we have done very much indeed in comparison with the past to bring about this condition, but far from enough to make it a reality.*

The second condition is agreement between the proletariat, which is exercising its dictatorship, that is, holds state power, and the majority of the peasant population. Agreement is a very broad concept which includes a whole series of measures and transitions. I must say at this point that our propaganda and agitation must be open and above-board. We must condemn most resolutely those who regard politics as a series of cheap little tricks, frequently bordering on deception. Their mistakes have to be corrected. You can't fool a class. We have done very much in the past three years to raise the political consciousness of the masses. They have been learning most from the sharp struggles. In keeping with our world outlook, the revolutionary experience we have accumulated over the decades, and the lessons of our revolution, we must state the issues plainly—the interests of these two classes differ, the small farmer does not want the same thing as the worker.

We know that so long as there is no revolution in other countries, only agreement with the peasantry can save the socialist revolution in Russia. And that is how it must be stated, frankly, at all meetings and in the entire press. We know that this agreement between the working class and the peasantry is not solid—to put it mildly, without entering the word “mildly” in the minutes—but, speaking plainly, it is very much worse. Under no circumstances must we try to hide anything; we must plainly state that the peasantry is dissatisfied with the form of our relations, that it does not want relations of this type and will not continue to live as it has hitherto. This is unquestionable. The peasantry has expressed its will in this respect definitely enough. It is the will of the vast masses of the working population. We must reckon with this, and we are sober enough politicians to say frankly: let us re-examine our policy in regard to the peasantry. The state of affairs that has prevailed so far cannot be continued any longer.

We must say to the peasants: “If you want to turn back, if you want to restore private property and unrestricted trade in

their entirety, it will certainly and inevitably mean falling under the rule of the landowners and the capitalists. This has been proved by a number of examples from history and examples of revolutions. The briefest examination of the ABC of communism and political economy will prove that this is inevitable. Let us then look into the matter. Is it or is it not in the interest of the peasantry to part ways with the proletariat only to slip back—and let the country slip back—to the rule of the capitalists and landowners? Consider this, and let us consider it together.”

We believe that if the matter is given proper consideration, the conclusion will be in our favour, in spite of the admittedly deep gulf between the economic interests of the proletariat and the small farmer.

Difficult as our position is in regard to resources, the needs of the middle peasantry must be satisfied. There are far more middle peasants now than before, the antagonisms have been smoothed out, the land has been distributed for use far more equally, the kulak's position has been undermined and he has been in considerable measure expropriated—in Russia more than in the Ukraine, and less in Siberia. On the whole, however, statistics show quite definitely that there has been a levelling out, an equalisation, in the village, that is, the old sharp division into kulaks and cropless peasants has disappeared. Everything has become more equitable, the peasantry in general has acquired the status of the middle peasant.

Can we satisfy this middle peasantry as such, with its economic peculiarities and economic roots? Any Communist who thought the economic basis, the economic roots, of small farming could be reshaped in three years was, of course, a dreamer. We need not conceal the fact that there were a good many such dreamers among us. Nor is there anything particularly bad in this. How could one start a social revolution in a country like ours without dreamers? Practice has, of course, shown the tremendous role all kinds of experiments and undertakings can play in the sphere of collective agriculture. But it has also afforded instances of these experiments as such playing a negative role, when people, with the best of intentions and desires, went to the countryside to set up communes but did not know how to run them because they had no experience in collective endeavour. The experience of these collective farms merely provided examples of how not to run farms: the peasants around either laughed or jeered.

You know perfectly well how many cases there have been of this kind. I repeat that this is not surprising, for it will take generations to remould the small farmer, and recast his mentality and habits. The only way to solve this problem of the small

farmer—to improve, so to speak, his mentality—is through the material basis, technical equipment, the extensive use of tractors and other farm machinery and electrification on a mass scale. This would remake the small farmer fundamentally and with tremendous speed. If I say this will take generations, it does not mean centuries. But you know perfectly well that to obtain tractors and other machinery and to electrify this vast country is a matter that may take decades in any case. Such is the objective situation.

We must try to satisfy the demands of the peasants who are dissatisfied and disgruntled, and legitimately so, and who cannot be otherwise. We must say to them: "Yes, this cannot go on any longer." How is the peasant to be satisfied and what does satisfying him mean? Where is the answer? Naturally it lies in the demands of the peasantry. We know these demands. But we must verify them and examine all that we know of the farmer's economic demands from the standpoint of economic science. If we go into this, we shall see at once that it will take essentially two things to satisfy the small farmer. The first is a certain freedom of exchange, freedom for the small private proprietor, and the second is the need to obtain commodities and products. What indeed would free exchange amount to if there was nothing to exchange, and freedom of trade, if there was nothing to trade with! It would all remain on paper, and classes cannot be satisfied with scraps of paper, they want the goods. These two conditions must be clearly understood. The second—how to get commodities and whether we shall be able to obtain them—we shall discuss later. It is the first condition—free exchange—that we must deal with now.

What is free exchange? It is unrestricted trade, and that means turning back towards capitalism. Free exchange and freedom of trade mean circulation of commodities between petty proprietors. All of us who have studied at least the elements of Marxism know that this exchange and freedom of trade inevitably lead to a division of commodity producers into owners of capital and owners of labour-power, a division into capitalists and wage-workers, i.e., a revival of capitalist wage-slavery, which does not fall from the sky but springs the world over precisely from the agricultural commodity economy. This we know perfectly well in theory, and anyone in Russia who has observed the small farmer's life and the conditions under which he farms must have seen this.

How then can the Communist Party recognise freedom to trade and accept it? Does not the proposition contain irreconcilable contradictions? The answer is that the practical solution of the problem naturally presents exceedingly great difficulties. I can foresee, and I know from the talks I have had with some comrades,

that the preliminary draft on replacing surplus-grain appropriation by a tax—it has been handed out to you—gives rise to legitimate and inevitable questions, mostly as regards permitting exchange of goods within the framework of local economic turnover. This is set forth at the end of Point 8. What does it mean, what limits are there to this exchange, how is it all to be implemented? Anyone who expects to get the answer at this Congress will be disappointed. We shall find the answer in our legislation; it is our task to lay down the principle to be followed and provide the slogan. Our Party is the government party and the decision the Party Congress passes will be obligatory for the entire Republic: it is now up to us to decide the question in principle. We must do this and inform the peasantry of our decision, for the sowing season is almost at hand. Further we must muster our whole administrative apparatus, all our theoretical forces and all our practical experience, in order to see how it can be done. Can it be done at all, theoretically speaking: can freedom of trade, freedom of capitalist enterprise for the small farmer, be restored to a certain extent without undermining the political power of the proletariat? Can it be done? Yes, it can, for everything hinges on the extent. If we were able to obtain even a small quantity of goods and hold them in the hands of the state—the proletariat exercising political power—and if we could release these goods into circulation, we, as the state, would add economic power to our political power. Release of these goods into circulation would stimulate small farming, which is in a terrible state and cannot develop owing to the grievous war conditions and the economic chaos. The small farmer, so long as he remains small, needs a spur, an incentive that accords with his economic basis, i.e., the individual small farm. Here you cannot avoid local free exchange. If this turnover gives the state, in exchange for manufactured goods, a certain minimum amount of grain to cover urban and industrial requirements, economic circulation will be revived, with state power remaining in the hands of the proletariat and growing stronger. The peasants want to be shown in practice that the worker who controls the mills and factories—industry—is capable of organising exchange with the peasantry. And, on the other hand, the vastness of our agricultural country with its poor transport system, boundless expanses, varying climate, diverse farming conditions, etc., makes a certain freedom of exchange between local agriculture and local industry, on a local scale, inevitable. In this respect, we are very much to blame for having gone too far; we overdid the nationalisation of industry and trade, clamping down on local exchange of commodities. Was that a mistake? It certainly was.

In this respect we have made many patent mistakes, and it

would be a great crime not to see it, and not to realise that we have failed to keep within bounds, and have not known where to stop. There has, of course, also been the factor of necessity—until now we have been living in the conditions of a savage war that imposed an unprecedented burden on us and left us no choice but to take war-time measures in the economic sphere as well. It was a miracle that the ruined country withstood this war, yet the miracle did not come from heaven, but grew out of the economic interests of the working class and the peasantry, whose mass enthusiasm created the miracle that defeated the landowners and capitalists. But at the same time it is an unquestionable fact that we went further than was theoretically and politically necessary, and this should not be concealed in our agitation and propaganda. We can allow free local exchange to an appreciable extent, without destroying, but actually strengthening the political power of the proletariat. How this is to be done, practice will show. I only wish to prove to you that theoretically it is conceivable. The proletariat, wielding state power, can, if it has any reserves at all, put them into circulation and thereby satisfy the middle peasant to a certain extent—on the basis of local economic exchange.

Now a few words about local economic exchange. First of all, the co-operatives. They are now in an extreme state of decline, but we naturally need them as a vehicle of local economic exchange. Our Programme stresses that the co-operatives left over from capitalism are the best distribution network and must be preserved. That is what the Programme says. Have we lived up to this? To a very slight extent, if at all, again partly because we have made mistakes, partly because of the war-time necessity. The co-operatives brought to the fore the more business-like, economically more advanced elements, thereby bringing out the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries in the political sphere. This is a law of chemistry—you can't do anything about it! (*Laughter.*) The Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries are people who either consciously or unconsciously work to restore capitalism and help the Yudeniches. This too is a law. We must fight them. And if there is to be a fight, it must be done the military way; we had to defend ourselves, and we did. But do we have to perpetuate the present situation? No, we do not. It would be a mistake to tie our hands in this way. Because of this I submit a resolution on the question of the co-operatives; it is very brief and I shall read it to you.

"Whereas the resolution of the Ninth Congress of the R.C.P. on the co-operatives is based entirely on the principle of surplus-grain appropriation, which is now superseded by a tax in kind, the Tenth Congress of the R.C.P. resolves:

"That the said resolution be rescinded.

"The Congress instructs the Central Committee to draw up and carry out through Party and Soviet channels decisions to improve and develop the structure and activity of the co-operatives in conformity with the Programme of the R.C.P. and with a view to substituting the tax in kind for the surplus-grain appropriation system."

You will say that this is rather vague. Yes, it is, and should necessarily be so to some extent. Why necessarily? Because if we are to be absolutely definite, we must know exactly what we are going to do over the year ahead. Who knows that? No one.

But the resolution of the Ninth Congress ties our hands by calling for "subordination to the Commissariat for Food". This is a fine institution, but it would be an obvious political mistake to subordinate the co-operatives to it and to no other, and to tie our hands at a time when we are reviewing our attitude to the small farmers. We must instruct the newly elected Central Committee to elaborate and carry out definite measures and changes, and to check up on every step we take forward or back—to what extent we must act, how to uphold our political interests, how much relaxation there must be to make things easier, how to check up on the results of our experience. Theoretically speaking, in this respect we are facing a number of transitional stages, or transitional measures. One thing is clear: the resolution of the Ninth Congress assumed that we would be advancing in a straight line, but it turned out, as has happened again and again throughout the history of revolutions, that the movement took a zigzag course. To tie one's hands with such a resolution would be a political mistake. Annuling it, we say that we must be guided by our Programme, which stresses the importance of the co-operative machinery.

As we annul the resolution, we say: work with a view to replacing surplus-grain appropriation by a tax. But when are we to do this? Not before the harvest, that is, in a few months' time. Will it be done the same way everywhere? In no circumstances. It would be the height of stupidity to apply the same pattern to central Russia, the Ukraine, and Siberia. I propose that this fundamental idea of unrestricted local exchange be formulated as a decision of this Congress.<sup>213</sup> I presume that following this decision the Central Committee will without fail send out a letter within the next few days and will point out—doing it better than I can do here (we shall find the best writers to polish up the style)—that there are to be no radical changes, no undue haste, or snap decisions, and that things should be done so as to give maximum satisfaction to the middle peasantry, without damaging the interests of the proletariat. Try one thing and

another, study things in practice, through experience, then share your experience with us, and let us know what you have managed to do, and we shall set up a special commission or even several commissions to consider the experience that has been accumulated. I think we should issue a special invitation to Comrade Preobrazhensky, the author of *Paper Money in the Epoch of the Proletarian Dictatorship*. This is a highly important question, for money circulation is a splendid test of the state of commodity circulation in the country; when it is unsatisfactory, money is not worth the paper it is printed on. In order to proceed on the basis of experience, we must check and recheck the measures we have adopted.

We shall be asked where the goods are to come from, for unrestricted trade requires goods, and the peasants are shrewd people and very good at scoffing. Can we obtain any goods now? Today we can, for our international economic position has greatly improved. We are waging a fight against the international capitalists, who, when they were first confronted by this Republic, called us "brigands and crocodiles" (I was told by an English artiste that she had heard these very words spoken by one of the most influential politicians<sup>216</sup>). Crocodiles are despicable. That was the verdict of international capital. It was the verdict of a class enemy and quite correct from his point of view. However, the correctness of such conclusions has to be verified in practice. If you are world capital—a world power—and you use words like "crocodile" and have all the technical means at your disposal, why not try and shoot it! Capital did shoot—and got the worst of it. It was then that the capitalists, who are forced to reckon with political and economic realities, declared: "We must trade." This is one of our greatest victories. Let me tell you that we now have two offers of a loan to the amount of nearly one hundred million gold rubles. We have gold, but you can't sell gold, because you can't eat it. Everybody has been reduced to a state of impoverishment, currency relations between all the capitalist countries are incredibly chaotic as a result of the war. Moreover, you need a merchant marine to communicate with Europe, and we have none. It is in hostile hands. We have concluded no treaty with France; she considers that we are her debtors and, consequently, that every ship we have is hers. They have a navy and we have none. In these circumstances we have so far been in a position to make use of our gold on a limited and ridiculously insignificant scale. Now we have two offers from capitalist bankers to float a loan of one hundred million. Of course, they will charge us an exorbitant rate of interest. Still it is their first offer of this kind; so far they have said: "I'll shoot you and take everything for nothing." Now, being unable

to shoot us, they are ready to trade with us. Trade agreements with America and Britain can now be said to be almost in the bag; the same applies to concessions. Yesterday I received another letter from Mr. Vanderlip, who is here and who, besides numerous complaints, sets forth a whole series of plans concerning concessions and a loan. He represents the shrewdest type of finance capitalist connected with the Western States of the U.S.A., those that are more hostile to Japan. So it is economically possible for us to obtain goods. How we shall manage to do it is another question, but a certain possibility is there.

I repeat, the type of economic relations which on top looks like a bloc with foreign capitalism makes it possible for the proletarian state power to arrange for free exchange with the peasantry below. I know—and I have had occasion to say this before—that this has evoked some sneers. There is a whole intellectual-bureaucratic stratum in Moscow, which is trying to shape "public opinion". "See what communism has come to!" these people sneer. "It's like a man on crutches and face all bandaged up—nothing but a picture puzzle." I have heard enough of gibes of this kind—they are either bureaucratic or just irresponsible. Russia emerged from the war in a state that can most of all be likened to that of a man beaten to within an inch of his life; the beating had gone on for seven years, and it's a mercy she can hobble about on crutches! That is the situation we are in! To think that we can get out of this state without crutches is to understand nothing! So long as there is no revolution in other countries, it would take us decades to extricate ourselves, and in these circumstances we cannot grudge hundreds of millions' or even thousands of millions' worth of our immense wealth, our rich raw material sources, in order to obtain help from the major capitalists. Later we shall recover it all and to spare. The rule of the proletariat cannot be maintained in a country laid waste as no country has ever been before—a country where the vast majority are peasants who are equally ruined without the help of capital, for which, of course, exorbitant interest will be extorted. This we must understand. Hence, the choice is between economic relations of this type and nothing at all. He who puts the question otherwise understands absolutely nothing in practical economics and is side-stepping the issue by resorting to gibes. We must recognise the fact that the masses are utterly worn-out and exhausted. What can you expect after even years of war in this country, if the more advanced countries still feel the effects of four years of war?

In this backward country, the workers, who have made unprecedented sacrifices, and the mass of the peasants are in a state of utter exhaustion after seven years of war. This condition bor-



ders on complete loss of working capacity. What is needed now is an economic breathing space. We had hoped to use our gold reserve to obtain some means of production. It would be best of all to make our own machines, but even if we bought them, we would thereby build up our industry. To do this, however, you must have a worker and a peasant who can work; yet in most cases they are in no condition for it, they are exhausted, worn-out. They must be assisted, and contrary to our old Programme the gold reserve must be used for consumer goods. That Programme was theoretically correct, but practically unsound. I shall pass on to you some information I have here from Comrade Lezhava. It shows that several hundred thousand poods of various items of food have already been bought in Lithuania, Finland, and Latvia and are being shipped in with the utmost speed. Today we have learned that a deal has been concluded in London for the purchase of 18,500,000 poods of coal, which we decided to buy in order to revive the industry of Petrograd and the textile industry. If we obtain goods for the peasant, it will, of course, be a violation of the Programme, an irregularity, but we must have a respite, for the people are exhausted to a point where they are not able to work.

I must say a few words about the individual exchange of commodities. When we speak of free exchange, we mean individual exchange of commodities, which in turn means encouraging the kulaks. What are we to do? We must not close our eyes to the fact that the switch from the appropriation of surpluses to the tax will mean more kulaks under the new system. They will appear where they could not appear before. This must not be combated by prohibitive measures but by association under state auspices and by government measures from above. If you can give the peasant machines you will help him grow, and when you provide machines or electric power, tens or hundreds of thousands of small kulaks will be wiped out. Until you can supply all that, you must provide a certain quantity of goods. If you have the goods, you have the power; to preclude, deny or renounce any such possibility means making all exchange unfeasible and not satisfying the middle peasant, who will be impossible to get along with. A greater proportion of peasants in Russia have become middle peasants, and there is no reason to fear exchange on an individual basis. Everyone can give something in exchange to the state: one, his grain surplus; another, his garden produce; a third, his labour. Basically the situation is this: we must satisfy the middle peasantry economically and go over to free exchange; otherwise it will be impossible—economically impossible—in view of the delay in the world revolution, to preserve the rule of the proletariat in Russia. We must clearly

realise this and not be afraid to say it. In the draft decision to substitute a tax in kind for the surplus appropriation system (the text has been handed out to you) you will find many discrepancies, even contradictions, and that is why we have added these words at the end: "The Congress, approving in substance [this is a rather loose word covering a great deal of ground] the propositions submitted by the Central Committee to substitute a tax in kind for surplus-grain appropriation, instructs the Central Committee of the Party to co-ordinate these propositions with the utmost dispatch." We know that they have not been co-ordinated, for we had no time to do so. We did not go into the details. The ways of levying the tax in practice will be worked out in detail and the tax implemented by a law issued by the All-Russia Central Executive Committee and the Council of People's Commissars. The procedure outlined is this: if you adopt the draft today, it will be given the force of a decision at the very first session of the All-Russia Central Executive Committee, which will not issue a law either, but modified regulations; the Council of People's Commissars and the Council of Labour and Defence will later make them into a law, and what is still more important, issue practical instructions. It is important that people in the localities should understand the significance of this and help us.

Why must we replace surplus appropriation by a tax? Surplus appropriation implied confiscation of all surpluses and establishment of a compulsory state monopoly. We could not do otherwise, for our need was extreme. Theoretically speaking, state monopoly is not necessarily the best system from the standpoint of the interests of socialism. A system of taxation and free exchange can be employed as a transitional measure in a peasant country possessing an industry—if this industry is running—and if there is a certain quantity of goods available.

The exchange is an incentive, a spur to the peasant. The proprietor can and will surely make an effort in his own interest when he knows that all his surplus produce will not be taken away from him and that he will only have to pay a tax, which should whenever possible be fixed in advance. The basic thing is to give the small farmer an incentive and a spur to till the soil. We must adapt our state economy to the economy of the middle peasant, which we have not managed to remake in three years, and will not be able to remake in another ten.

The state had to face definite responsibilities in the sphere of food. Because of this the appropriation quotas were increased last year. The tax must be smaller. The exact figures have not been defined, nor can they be defined. Popov's booklet, *Grain Production of the Soviet and Federated Republics*, gives the exact

data issued by our Central Statistical Board and shows why agricultural production has fallen off.<sup>215</sup>

If there is a crop failure, surpluses cannot be collected because there will be none. They would have to be taken out of the peasants' mouths. If there is a crop, everybody will go moderately hungry and the state will be saved, or it will perish, unless we take from people who do not eat their fill as it is. This is what we must make clear in our propaganda among the peasants. A fair harvest will mean a surplus of up to five hundred million poods. This will cover consumption and yield a certain reserve. The important thing is to give the peasants an economic incentive. The small proprietor must be told: "It is your job as a proprietor to produce, and the state will take a minimum tax."

My time is nearly up, I must close; I repeat: we cannot issue a law now. The trouble with our resolution is that it is not sufficiently legislative—laws are not written at Party congresses. Hence we propose that the resolution submitted by the C.C. be adopted as a basis and that the C.C. be instructed to co-ordinate the various propositions contained in it. We shall print the text of the resolution and Party officials in the various localities will try to co-ordinate and correct it. It cannot be co-ordinated from beginning to end; this is an insoluble problem, for life is too varied. To find the transitional measures is a very difficult task. If we are unable to do this quickly and directly, we must not lose heart, for we shall win through in the end. No peasant with the slightest glimmer of political consciousness will fail to understand that we, as the government, represent the working class and all those working people with whom the labouring peasants (and they make up nine-tenths of the total) can agree, that any turn back will mean a return to the old, tsarist government. The experience of Kronstadt<sup>216</sup> proves this. There they do not want either the whiteguards or our government—and there is no other—and as a result they find themselves in a situation which speaks best of all in our favour and against any new government.

We are now in a position to come to an agreement with the peasants, and this must be done in practice, skilfully, efficiently, and flexibly. We are familiar with the apparatus of the Commissariat for Food and know that it is one of the best we have. We see that it is better than that of the others and we must preserve it. Administrative machinery, however, must be subordinated to politics. The splendid apparatus of the Commissariat for Food will be useless if we cannot establish proper relations with the peasants, for otherwise this splendid apparatus will be serving Denikin and Kolchak, and not our own class. Since resolute change, flexibility and skilful transition have become politically necessary, the leaders must realise it. A strong apparatus must be

suitable for any manoeuvre, but struggle is inevitable when its strength makes it unwieldy and hampers change. All efforts must, therefore, be turned to achieving our aim: the complete subordination of the apparatus to politics. Politics are relations between classes, and that will decide the fate of our Republic. The stronger the apparatus, as an auxiliary, the better and more suitable it is for manoeuvring. If it cannot manoeuvre, it is of no use to us.

I ask you to bear in mind this basic fact—it will take several months to work out the details and interpretations. The chief thing to bear in mind at the moment is that we must let the whole world know, by wireless this very night, of our decision; we must announce that this Congress of the government party is, in the main, replacing the surplus appropriation system by a tax and is giving the small farmer certain incentives to expand his farm and plant more; that by embarking on this course the Congress is correcting the system of relations between the proletariat and the peasantry and expresses its conviction that in this way these relations will be made durable. (*Stormy applause.*)

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### 3

## PRELIMINARY DRAFT RESOLUTION OF THE TENTH CONGRESS OF THE R.C.P. ON PARTY UNITY

1. The Congress calls the attention of all members of the Party to the fact that the unity and cohesion of the ranks of the Party, the guarantee of complete mutual confidence among Party members and genuine team-work that really embodies the unanimity of will of the vanguard of the proletariat, are particularly essential at the present time, when a number of circumstances are increasing the vacillation among the petty-bourgeois population of the country.

2. Notwithstanding this, even before the general Party discussion on the trade unions, certain signs of factionalism had been apparent in the Party—the formation of groups with separate platforms, striving to a certain degree to segregate and create their own group discipline. Such symptoms of factionalism were manifested, for example, at a Party conference in Moscow (November 1920) and at a Party conference in Kharkov,<sup>217</sup> by the so-called Workers' Opposition group, and partly by the so-called Democratic Centralism group.<sup>218</sup>

All class-conscious workers must clearly realise that factionalism of any kind is harmful and impermissible, for no matter how members of individual groups may desire to safeguard Party unity, factionalism in practice inevitably leads to the weakening of team-work and to intensified and repeated attempts by the enemies of the governing Party, who have wormed their way into it, to widen the cleavage and to use it for counter-revolutionary purposes.

The way the enemies of the proletariat take advantage of every deviation from a thoroughly consistent communist line was perhaps most strikingly shown in the case of the Kronstadt mutiny, when the bourgeois counter-revolutionaries and whiteguards in all countries of the world immediately expressed their readiness to accept the slogans of the Soviet system, if only they might thereby secure the overthrow of the dictatorship of the proletariat in Russia, and when the Socialist-Revolutionaries and the bourgeois counter-revolutionaries in general resorted in Kronstadt to slogans calling for an insurrection against the Soviet Government of Russia ostensibly in the interest of the Soviet power. These facts fully prove that the whiteguards strive, and are able, to disguise themselves as Communists, and even as the most Left-wing Communists, solely for the purpose of weakening and destroying the bulwark of the proletarian revolution in Russia. Menshevik leaflets distributed in Petrograd on the eve of the Kronstadt mutiny likewise show how the Mensheviks took advantage of the disagreements and certain rudiments of factionalism in the Russian Communist Party actually in order to egg on and support the Kronstadt mutineers, the Socialist-Revolutionaries and the whiteguards, while claiming to be opponents of mutiny and supporters of the Soviet power, only with supposedly slight modifications.

3. In this question, propaganda should consist, on the one hand, in a comprehensive explanation of the harmfulness and danger of factionalism from the standpoint of Party unity and of achieving unanimity of will among the vanguard of the proletariat as the fundamental condition for the success of the dictatorship of the proletariat; and, on the other hand, in an explanation of the peculiar features of the latest tactical devices of the enemies of the Soviet power. These enemies, having realised the hopelessness of counter-revolution under an openly whiteguard flag, are now doing their utmost to utilise the disagreements within the Russian Communist Party and to further the counter-revolution in one way or another by transferring power to a political group which is outwardly closest to recognition of the Soviet power.

Propaganda must also teach the lessons of preceding revolutions, in which the counter-revolution made a point of support-

ing the opposition to the extreme revolutionary party which stood closest to the latter, in order to undermine and overthrow the revolutionary dictatorship and thus pave the way for the subsequent complete victory of the counter-revolution, of the capitalists and landowners.

4. In the practical struggle against factionalism, every organization of the Party must take strict measures to prevent all factional actions. Criticism of the Party's shortcomings, which is absolutely necessary, must be conducted in such a way that every practical proposal shall be submitted immediately, without any delay, in the most precise form possible, for consideration and decision to the leading local and central bodies of the Party. Moreover, every critic must see to it that the form of his criticism takes account of the position of the Party, surrounded as it is by a ring of enemies, and that the content of his criticism is such that, by directly participating in Soviet and Party work, he can test the rectification of the errors of the Party or of individual Party members in practice. Analyses of the Party's general line, estimates of its practical experience, check-ups of the fulfilment of its decisions, studies of methods of rectifying errors, etc., must under no circumstances be submitted for preliminary discussion to groups formed on the basis of "platforms", etc., but must in all cases be submitted for discussion directly to all the members of the Party. For this purpose, the Congress orders a more regular publication of *Diskussionny Listok*<sup>219</sup> and special symposiums to promote unceasing efforts to ensure that criticism shall be concentrated on essentials and shall not assume a form capable of assisting the class enemies of the proletariat.

5. Rejecting in principle the deviation towards syndicalism and anarchism, which is examined in a special resolution,<sup>220</sup> and instructing the Central Committee to secure the complete elimination of all factionalism, the Congress at the same time declares that every practical proposal concerning questions to which the so-called Workers' Opposition group, for example, has devoted special attention, such as purging the Party of non-proletarian and unreliable elements, combating bureaucratic practices, developing democracy and workers' initiative, etc., must be examined with the greatest care and tested in practice. The Party must know that we have not taken all the necessary measures in regard to these questions because of various obstacles, but that, while ruthlessly rejecting impractical and factional pseudo-criticism, the Party will unceasingly continue—trying out new methods—to fight with all the means at its disposal against the evils of bureaucracy, for the extension of democracy and initiative, for detecting, exposing and expelling from the Party elements that have wormed their way into its ranks, etc.

6. The Congress, therefore, hereby declares dissolved and orders the immediate dissolution of all groups without exception formed on the basis of one platform or another (such as the Workers' Opposition group, the Democratic Centralism group, etc.). Non-observance of this decision of the Congress shall entail unconditional and instant expulsion from the Party.

7. In order to ensure strict discipline within the Party and in all Soviet work and to secure the maximum unanimity in eliminating all factionalism, the Congress authorises the Central Committee, in cases of breach of discipline or of a revival or toleration of factionalism, to apply all Party penalties, including expulsion, and in regard to members of the Central Committee, reduction to the status of alternate members and, as an extreme measure, expulsion from the Party. A necessary condition for the application of such an extreme measure to members of the Central Committee, alternate members of the Central Committee and members of the Control Commission is the convocation of a Plenary Meeting of the Central Committee, to which all alternate members of the Central Committee and all members of the Control Commission shall be invited. If such a general assembly of the most responsible leaders of the Party deems it necessary by a two-thirds majority to reduce a member of the Central Committee to the status of alternate member, or to expel him from the Party, this measure shall be put into effect immediately.<sup>221</sup>

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#### 4

### PRELIMINARY DRAFT RESOLUTION OF THE TENTH CONGRESS OF THE R.C.P. ON THE SYNDICALIST AND ANARCHIST DEVIATION IN OUR PARTY

1. A syndicalist and anarchist deviation has been definitely revealed in our Party in the past few months. It calls for the most resolute measures of ideological struggle and also for purging the Party and restoring its health.

2. The said deviation is due partly to the influx into the Party of former Mensheviks, and also of workers and peasants who have not yet fully assimilated the communist world outlook. Mainly, however, this deviation is due to the influence exercised upon the

proletariat and on the Russian Communist Party by the petty-bourgeois element, which is exceptionally strong in our country, and which inevitably engenders vacillation towards anarchism, particularly at a time when the condition of the masses has greatly deteriorated as a consequence of the crop failure and the devastating effects of war, and when the demobilisation of the army numbering millions sets loose hundreds and hundreds of thousands of peasants and workers unable immediately to find regular means of livelihood.

3. The most theoretically complete and clearly defined expression of this deviation (*or*: one of the most complete, etc., expressions of this deviation) is the theses and other literary productions of the so-called Workers' Opposition group. Sufficiently illustrative of this is, for example, the following thesis propounded by this group: "The organisation of the management of the national economy is the function of an All-Russia Congress of Producers organised in industrial unions which shall elect a central body to run the whole of the national economy of the Republic."

The ideas at the bottom of this and numerous similar statements are radically wrong in theory, and represent a complete break with Marxism and communism, with the practical experience of all semi-proletarian revolutions and of the present proletarian revolution.

First, the concept "producer" combines proletarians with semi-proletarians and small commodity producers, thus radically departing from the fundamental concept of the class struggle and from the fundamental demand that a precise distinction be drawn between classes.

Secondly, the bidding for or flirtation with the non-Party masses, which is expressed in the above-quoted thesis, is an equally radical departure from Marxism.

Marxism teaches—and this tenet has not only been formally endorsed by the whole of the Communist International in the decisions of the Second (1920) Congress of the Comintern on the role of the political party of the proletariat, but has also been confirmed in practice by our revolution—that only the political party of the working class, i.e., the Communist Party, is capable of uniting, training and organising a vanguard of the proletariat and of the whole mass of the working people that alone will be capable of withstanding the inevitable petty-bourgeois vacillations of this mass and the inevitable traditions and relapses of narrow craft unionism or craft prejudices among the proletariat, and of guiding all the united activities of the whole of the proletariat, i.e., of leading it politically, and through it, the whole mass of the working people. Without this the dictatorship of the proletariat is impossible



The wrong understanding of the role of the Communist Party in its relation to the non-Party proletariat, and in the relation of the first and second factors to the whole mass of working people, is a radical theoretical departure from communism and a deviation towards syndicalism and anarchism, and this deviation permeates all the views of the Workers' Opposition group.

4. The Tenth Congress of the Russian Communist Party declares that it also regards as radically wrong all attempts on the part of the said group and of other persons to defend their fallacious views by referring to Paragraph 5 of the economic section of the Programme of the Russian Communist Party, which deals with the role of the trade unions. This paragraph says that "the trade unions should eventually arrive at a *de facto* concentration in their hands of the whole administration of the whole national economy, as a single economic entity", and that they will "ensure in this way indissoluble ties between the central state administration, the national economy and the broad masses of working people", "drawing" these masses "into direct economic management".

This paragraph in the Programme of the Russian Communist Party also says that a prerequisite for the state at which the trade unions "should eventually arrive" is the process whereby they increasingly "divest themselves of the narrow craft-union spirit" and embrace the majority "and eventually all" of the working people.

Lastly, this paragraph in the Programme of the Russian Communist Party emphasises that "on the strength of the laws of the R.S.F.S.R., and established practice, the trade unions participate in all the local and central organs of industrial management".

Instead of studying the practical experience of participation in administration, and instead of developing this experience further, strictly in conformity with successes achieved and mistakes rectified, the syndicalists and anarchists advance as an immediate slogan "congresses or a congress of producers" "to elect" the organs of economic management. Thus, the leading, educational and organising role of the Party in relation to the trade unions of the proletariat, and of the latter to the semi-petty-bourgeois and even wholly petty-bourgeois masses of working people, is completely evaded and eliminated, and instead of continuing and correcting the practical work of building new forms of economy already begun by the Soviet state, we get petty-bourgeois-anarchist disruption of this work, which can only lead to the triumph of the bourgeois counter-revolution.

5. In addition to the theoretical fallacies and a radically wrong attitude towards the practical experience of economic organisation already begun by the Soviet government, the Congress of

the Russian Communist Party discerns in the views of this and similar groups and persons a gross political mistake and a direct political danger to the very existence of the dictatorship of the proletariat.

In a country like Russia, the overwhelming preponderance of the petty-bourgeois element and the devastation, impoverishment, epidemics, crop failures, extreme want and hardship inevitably resulting from the war, engender particularly sharp vacillations in the temper of the petty-bourgeois and semi-proletarian masses. First they incline towards a strengthening of the alliance between these masses and the proletariat, and then towards bourgeois restoration. The experience of all revolutions in the eighteenth, nineteenth, and twentieth centuries shows most clearly and convincingly that the only possible result of these vacillations—if the unity, strength and influence of the revolutionary vanguard of the proletariat is weakened in the slightest degree—will be the restoration of the power and property of the capitalists and land-owners.

Hence, the views of the Workers' Opposition and of like-minded elements are not only wrong in theory, but are an expression of petty-bourgeois and anarchist wavering in practice, and actually weaken the consistency of the leading line of the Communist Party and help the class enemies of the proletarian revolution.

6. In view of all this, the Congress of the R.C.P., emphatically rejecting the said ideas, as being expressive of a syndicalist and anarchist deviation, deems it necessary:

First, to wage an unswerving and systematic struggle against these ideas;

Secondly, to recognise the propaganda of these ideas as being incompatible with membership of the R.C.P.

Instructing the C.C. of the Party strictly to enforce these decisions, the Congress at the same time points out that special publications, symposiums, etc., can and should provide space for a most comprehensive exchange of opinion between Party members on all the questions herein indicated

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# THE TAX IN KIND

(THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE NEW POLICY  
AND ITS CONDITIONS)

## IN LIEU OF INTRODUCTION

The question of the tax in kind is at present attracting very great attention and is giving rise to much discussion and argument. This is quite natural, because in present conditions it is indeed one of the principal questions of policy.

The discussion is somewhat disordered, a fault to which, for very obvious reasons, we must all plead guilty. All the more useful would it be, therefore, to try to approach the question, not from its "topical" aspect, but from the aspect of general principle. In other words, to examine the general, fundamental background of the picture on which we are now tracing the pattern of definite practical measures of present-day policy.

In order to make this attempt I will take the liberty of quoting a long passage from my pamphlet, *The Chief Task of Our Day. "Left-Wing" Childishness and the Petty-Bourgeois Mentality*.<sup>\*</sup> It was published by the Petrograd Soviet of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies in 1918 and contains, first, a newspaper article, dated March 11, 1918, on the Brest Peace, and, second, my polemic against the then existing group of Left Communists, dated May 5, 1918. The polemic is now superfluous and I omit it, leaving what appertains to the discussion on "state capitalism" and the main elements of our present-day economy, which is transitional from capitalism to socialism.

Here is what I wrote at the time:

## THE PRESENT-DAY ECONOMY OF RUSSIA

(EXTRACT FROM THE 1918 PAMPHLET)

State capitalism would be a step forward as compared with the present state of affairs in our Soviet Republic. If in approximately six months' time state capitalism became established in

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<sup>\*</sup> See present edition, Vol. 2, pp. 623-46.—*Ed.*

our Republic, this would be a great success and a sure guarantee that within a year socialism will have gained a permanently firm hold and will have become invincible in this country.

I can imagine with what noble indignation some people will recoil from these words. . . . What! The transition to state *capitalism* in the Soviet Socialist Republic would be a step forward? . . . Isn't this the betrayal of socialism?

We must deal with this point in greater detail.

Firstly, we must examine the nature of the *transition* from capitalism to socialism that gives us the right and the grounds to call our country a Socialist Republic of Soviets

Secondly, we must expose the error of those who fail to see the petty-bourgeois economic conditions and the petty-bourgeois element as the *principal* enemy of socialism in our country.

Thirdly, we must fully understand the economic implications of the distinction between the *Soviet* state and the bourgeois state.

Let us examine these three points.

No one, I think, in studying the question of the economic system of Russia, has denied its transitional character. Nor, I think, has any Communist denied that the term Soviet Socialist Republic implies the determination of the Soviet power to achieve the transition to socialism, and not that the existing economic system is recognised as a socialist order.

But what does the word "transition" mean? Does it not mean, as applied to an economy, that the present system contains elements, particles, fragments of both capitalism and socialism? Everyone will admit that it does. But not all who admit this take the trouble to consider what elements actually constitute the various socio-economic structures that exist in Russia at the present time. And this is the crux of the question.

Let us enumerate these elements:

- (1) patriarchal, i.e., to a considerable extent natural, peasant farming;
- (2) small commodity production (this includes the majority of those peasants who sell their grain),
- (3) private capitalism;
- (4) state capitalism;
- (5) socialism.

Russia is so vast and so varied that all these different types of socio-economic structures are intermingled. This is what constitutes the specific feature of the situation

The question arises: What elements predominate? Clearly, in a small-peasant country, the petty-bourgeois element predominates and it must predominate, for the great majority—those working the land—are small commodity producers. The shell of state capitalism (grain monopoly, state-controlled entrepreneurs and trad-

ers, bourgeois co-operators) is pierced now in one place, now in another by *profiteers*, the chief object of profiteering being *grain*.

It is in this field that the main struggle is being waged. Between what elements is this struggle being waged if we are to speak in terms of economic categories such as "state capitalism"? Between the fourth and fifth in the order in which I have just enumerated them? Of course not. It is not state capitalism that is at war with socialism, but the petty bourgeoisie plus private capitalism fighting together against state capitalism and socialism. The petty bourgeoisie oppose *every kind* of state interference, accounting and control, whether it be state-capitalist or state-socialist. This is an unquestionable fact of reality whose misunderstanding lies at the root of many economic mistakes. The profiteer, the commercial racketeer, the disrupter of monopoly—these are our principal "internal" enemies, the enemies of the economic measures of the Soviet power. A hundred and twenty-five years ago it might have been excusable for the French petty bourgeoisie the most ardent and sincere revolutionaries, to try to crush the profiteer by executing a few of the "chosen" and by making thunderous declarations. Today, however, the purely French approach to the question assumed by some Left Socialist-Revolutionaries can arouse nothing but disgust and revulsion in every politically conscious revolutionary. We know perfectly well that the economic basis of profiteering is both the small proprietors, who are exceptionally widespread in Russia, and private capitalism, of which every petty bourgeois is an agent. We know that the million tentacles of this petty-bourgeois octopus now and again encircle various sections of the workers, that instead of state monopoly, profiteering forces its way into every pore of our social and economic organism.

Those who fail to see this show by their blindness that they are slaves of petty-bourgeois prejudices. . . .

The petty bourgeoisie have money put away, the few thousands that they made during the war by "honest" and especially by dishonest means. They are the characteristic economic type, that is, the basis of profiteering and private capitalism. Money is a certificate entitling the possessor to receive social wealth; and a vast section of small proprietors, numbering millions, cling to this certificate and conceal it from the "state". They do not believe in socialism or communism, and "mark time" until the proletarian storm blows over. Either we subordinate the petty bourgeoisie to our control and accounting (we can do this if we organise the poor, that is, the majority of the population or semi-proletarians, round the politically conscious proletarian vanguard), or they will overthrow our workers' power as surely and as inevitably as the revolution was overthrown by the Napoleons and the Cavaignacs

who sprang from this very soil of petty proprietorship. That is how the question stands. That is the only view we can take of the matter. . . .

The petty bourgeois who hoards his thousands is an enemy of state capitalism. He wants to employ these thousands just for himself, against the poor, in opposition to any kind of state control. And the sum total of these thousands, amounting to many thousands of millions, forms the base for profiteering, which undermines our socialist construction. Let us assume that a certain number of workers produce in a few days values equal to 1,000. Let us then assume that 200 of this total vanishes owing to petty profiteering, various kinds of embezzlement and the evasion by the small proprietors of Soviet decrees and regulations. Every politically conscious worker will say that if better order and organisation could be obtained at the price of 300 out of the 1,000 he would willingly give 300 instead of 200, for it will be quite easy under the Soviet power to reduce this "tribute" later on to, say, 100 or 50, once order and organisation are established and the petty-bourgeois disruption of state monopoly is completely overcome.

This simple illustration in figures, which I have deliberately simplified to the utmost in order to make it absolutely clear, explains the present correlation of state capitalism and socialism. The workers hold state power and have every legal opportunity of "taking" the whole thousand, without giving up a single kopek, except for socialist purposes. This legal opportunity, which rests upon the actual transition of power to the workers, is an element of socialism. But in many ways, the small-proprietary and private-capitalist element undermines this legal position, drags in profiteering and hinders the execution of Soviet decrees. State capitalism would be a gigantic step forward *even if* we paid *more* than we are paying at present (I took the numerical example deliberately to bring this out more sharply), because it is worth paying for "tuition", because it is useful for the workers, because victory over disorder, economic ruin and laxity is the most important thing, because the continuation of the anarchy of small ownership is the greatest, the most serious danger, and it will *certainly* be our ruin (unless we overcome it), whereas not only will the payment of a heavier tribute to state capitalism not ruin us, it will lead us to socialism by the surest road. When the working class has learned how to defend the state system against the anarchy of small ownership, when it has learned to organise large-scale production on a national scale along state-capitalist lines, it will hold, if I may use the expression, all the trump cards, and the consolidation of socialism will be assured.

In the first place *economically* state capitalism is immeasurably superior to our present economic system.

In the second place there is nothing terrible in it for the Soviet power, for the Soviet state is a state in which the power of the workers and the poor is assured. . . .

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To make things even clearer, let us first of all take the most concrete example of state capitalism. Everybody knows what this example is. It is Germany. Here we have "the last word" in modern large-scale capitalist engineering and planned organisation, *subordinated to Junker-bourgeois imperialism*. Cross out the words in italics, and in place of the militarist, Junker, bourgeois, imperialist state put also a state, but of a different social type, of a different class content—a Soviet state, that is, a proletarian state, and you will have the sum total of the conditions necessary for socialism.

Socialism is inconceivable without large-scale capitalist engineering based on the latest discoveries of modern science. It is inconceivable without planned state organisation which keeps tens of millions of people to the strictest observance of a unified standard in production and distribution. We Marxists have always spoken of this, and it is not worth while wasting two seconds talking to people who do not understand even this (anarchists and a good half of the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries).

At the same time socialism is inconceivable unless the proletariat is the ruler of the state. This also is ABC. And history (which nobody, except Menshevik blockheads of the first order, ever expected to bring about "complete" socialism smoothly, gently, easily and simply) has taken such a peculiar course that it has given birth in 1918 to two unconnected halves of socialism existing side by side like two future chickens in the single shell of international imperialism. In 1918, Germany and Russia had become the most striking embodiment of the material realisation of the economic, the productive and the socio-economic conditions for socialism, on the one hand, and the political conditions, on the other.

A victorious proletarian revolution in Germany would immediately and very easily smash any shell of imperialism (which unfortunately is made of the best steel, and hence cannot be broken by the efforts of any chicken) and would bring about the victory of world socialism for certain, without any difficulty, or with only slight difficulty—if, of course, by "difficulty" we mean difficulty on a world-historical scale, and not in the parochial philistine sense.

While the revolution in Germany is still slow in "coming forth", our task is to *study* the state capitalism of the Germans, to *spare*

*no effort* in copying it and not shrink from adopting dictatorial methods to hasten the copying of Western culture by barbarian Russia, without hesitating to use barbarous methods in fighting barbarism. If there are anarchists and Left Socialist-Revolutionaries (I recall offhand the speeches of Kärelin and Ghe at the meeting of the Central Executive Committee) who indulge in Kärelin-like reflections and say that it is unbecoming for us revolutionaries to "take lessons" from German imperialism, there is only one thing we can say in reply: the revolution that took these people seriously would perish irrevocably (and deservedly).

At present petty-bourgeois capitalism prevails in Russia, and it is *one and the same road* that leads from it to both large-scale state capitalism and to socialism, *through one and the same* intermediary station called "national accounting and control of production and distribution". Those who fail to understand this are committing an unpardonable mistake in economics. Either they do not know the facts of life, do not see what actually exists and are unable to look the truth in the face, or they confine themselves to abstractly comparing "socialism" with "capitalism" and fail to study the concrete forms and stages of the transition that is taking place in our country.

Let it be said in parenthesis that this is the very theoretical mistake which misled the best people in the *Novaya Zhizn* and *Upervod*<sup>222</sup> camp. The worst and the mediocre of these, owing to their stupidity and spinelessness, tag along behind the bourgeoisie, of whom they stand in awe; the best of them have failed to understand that it was not without reason that the teachers of socialism spoke of a whole period of transition from capitalism to socialism and emphasised the "prolonged birth pangs" of the new society.<sup>223</sup> And this new society is again an abstraction which can come into being only by passing through a series of varied, imperfect and concrete attempts to create this or that socialist state.

It is because Russia cannot advance from the economic situation now existing here without traversing the ground *which is common* to state capitalism and to socialism (national accounting and control) that the attempt to frighten others as well as themselves with "evolution towards state capitalism" is utter theoretical nonsense. This is letting one's thoughts wander away from the true road of "evolution", and failing to understand what this road is. In practice, it is equivalent to *pulling us back* to small-proprietary capitalism.

In order to convince the reader that this is not the first time I have given this "high" appreciation of state capitalism and that I gave it *before* the Bolsheviks seized power, I take the liberty of quoting the following passage from my pamphlet, *The Impending*



*Catastrophe and How To Combat It*, written in September 1917.

"Try to substitute for the Junker-capitalist state, for the land-owner-capitalist state, a revolutionary-democratic state, i.e., a state which in a revolutionary way abolishes all privileges and does not fear to introduce the fullest democracy in a revolutionary way. You will find that, given a really revolutionary-democratic state, state-monopoly capitalism inevitably and unavoidably implies a step . . . towards socialism. . . .

"For socialism is merely the next step forward from state-capitalist monopoly. . . .

"State-monopoly capitalism is a complete material preparation for socialism, the threshold of socialism, a rung on the ladder of history between which and the rung called socialism there are no intermediate rungs" (pp. 27 and 28).\*

Please note that this was written when Kerensky was in power, that we are discussing *not* the dictatorship of the proletariat, *not* the socialist state, but the "revolutionary-democratic" state. Is it not clear that *the higher* we stand on this political ladder, *the more completely* we incorporate the socialist state and the dictatorship of the proletariat in the Soviets, *the less* ought we to fear "state capitalism"? Is it not clear that from the *material*, economic and productive point of view, we are not yet on the "threshold" of socialism? Is it not clear that we cannot pass through the door of socialism without crossing the "threshold" we have not yet reached? . . .

\* \* \*

The following is also extremely instructive.

When we argued with Comrade Bukharin in the Central Executive Committee, he declared, among other things, that on the question of high salaries for specialists "they" were "to the right of Lenin", for in this case "they" saw no deviation from principle, bearing in mind Marx's words that under certain conditions it is more expedient for the working class to "buy out the whole lot of them"<sup>22</sup> (namely, the whole lot of capitalists, i.e., to *buy* from the bourgeoisie the land, factories, works and other means of production).

That is a very interesting statement. . . .

Let us consider Marx's idea carefully.

Marx was talking about the Britain of the seventies of the last century, about the culminating point in the development of pre-monopoly capitalism. At that time Britain was a country in which

militarism and bureaucracy were less pronounced than in any other, a country in which there was the greatest possibility of a "peaceful" victory for socialism in the sense of the workers "buying out" the bourgeoisie. And Marx said that under certain conditions the workers would certainly not refuse to buy out the bourgeoisie. Marx did not commit himself, or the future leaders of the socialist revolution, to matters of form, to ways and means of bringing about the revolution. He understood perfectly well that a vast number of new problems would arise, that the whole situation would change in the course of the revolution, and that the situation would change radically and often in the course of the revolution.

Well, and what about Soviet Russia? Is it not clear that *after* the seizure of power by the proletariat and *after* the crushing of the exploiters' armed resistance and sabotage—*certain* conditions prevail which correspond to those which might have existed in Britain half a century ago had a peaceful transition to socialism begun there? The subordination of the capitalists to the workers in Britain would have been assured at that time owing to the following circumstances: (1) the absolute preponderance of workers, of proletarians, in the population owing to the absence of a peasantry (in Britain in the seventies there were signs that gave hope of an extremely rapid spread of socialism among agricultural labourers); (2) the excellent organisation of the proletariat in trade unions (Britain was at that time the leading country in the world in this respect); (3) the comparatively high level of culture of the proletariat, which had been trained by centuries of development of political liberty; (4) the old habit of the well-organised British capitalists of settling political and economic questions by compromise—at that time the British capitalists were better organised than the capitalists of any country in the world (this superiority has now passed to German). These were the circumstances which at the time gave rise to the idea that the *peaceful* subjugation of the British capitalists by the workers was possible.

In our country, at the present time, this subjugation is assured by certain premises of fundamental significance (the victory in October and the suppression, from October to February, of the capitalists' armed resistance and sabotage). But *instead of* the absolute preponderance of workers, of proletarians, in the population, and *instead of* a high degree of organisation among them, the important factor of victory in Russia was the support the proletarians received from the poor peasants and those who had experienced sudden ruin. Finally, we have neither a high degree of culture nor the habit of compromise. If these concrete conditions are carefully considered, it will become clear that we now can and

ought to employ a *combination* of two methods. On the one hand, we must ruthlessly suppress the uncultured capitalists who refuse to have anything to do with "state capitalism" or to consider any form of compromise, and who continue by means of profiteering, by bribing the poor peasants, etc., to hinder the realisation of the measures taken by the Soviets. On the other hand, we must use the *method of compromise*, or of buying out the cultured capitalists who agree to "state capitalism", who are capable of putting it into practice and who are useful to the proletariat as intelligent and experienced organisers of the largest types of enterprises, which actually supply products to tens of millions of people.

Bukharin is an extremely well-read Marxist economist. He therefore remembered that Marx was profoundly right when he taught the workers the importance of preserving the organisation of large-scale production, precisely for the purpose of facilitating the transition to socialism. Marx taught that (as an exception, and Britain was then an exception) the idea was conceivable of *paying the capitalists well*, of buying them out, if the circumstances were such as to compel the capitalists to submit peacefully and to come over to socialism in a cultured and organised fashion, provided they were paid well.

But Bukharin went astray because he did not go deep enough into the specific features of the situation in Russia at the present time—an exceptional situation when we, the Russian proletariat, are *in advance* of any Britain or any Germany as regards political system, as regards the strength of the workers' political power, but are *behind* the most backward West-European country as regards organising a good state capitalism, as regards our level of culture and the degree of material and productive preparedness for the "introduction" of socialism. Is it not clear that the specific nature of the present situation creates the need for a specific type of "buying out" operation which the workers must offer to the most cultured, the most talented, the most capable organisers among the capitalists who are ready to enter the service of the Soviet power and to help honestly in organising "state" production on the largest possible scale? Is it not clear that in this specific situation we must make every effort to avoid two mistakes, both of which are of a petty-bourgeois nature? On the one hand, it would be a fatal mistake to declare that since there is a discrepancy between our economic "forces" and our political strength, it "follows" that we should not have seized power. Such an argument can be advanced only by a "man in a muffler",<sup>225</sup> who forgets that there will always be such a "discrepancy", that it always exists in the development of nature as well as in the development of society, that only by a series of attempts—each of which, taken by itself, will be one-sided and will suffer from

certain inconsistencies—will complete socialism be created by the revolutionary co-operation of the proletarians of *all* countries.

On the other hand, it would be an obvious mistake to give free rein to ranters and phrase-mongers who allow themselves to be carried away by the “dazzling” revolutionary spirit, but who are incapable of sustained thoughtful and deliberate revolutionary work which takes into account the most difficult stages of transition.

Fortunately, the history of the development of revolutionary parties and of the struggle that Bolshevism waged against them has left us a heritage of sharply defined types, of which the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries and anarchists are striking examples of bad revolutionaries. They are now shouting hysterically, choking and shouting themselves hoarse, against the “compromise” of the “Right Bolsheviks”. But they are incapable of understanding *what* is bad in “compromise”, and *why* “compromise” has been justly condemned by history and the course of the revolution.

Compromise in Kerensky's time meant the surrender of power to the imperialist bourgeoisie, and the question of power is the fundamental question of every revolution. Compromise by a section of the Bolsheviks in October-November 1917 either meant that they feared the proletariat seizing power or wished to *share* power equally, not only with “unreliable fellow-travellers” like the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries, but also with enemies, with the Chernovists and the Mensheviks. The latter would inevitably have hindered us in fundamental matters, such as the dissolution of the Constituent Assembly, the ruthless suppression of the Bogayevskys, the universal setting up of the Soviet institutions, and in every act of confiscation.

Now power has been seized, retained and consolidated in the hands of a single party, the party of the proletariat, even without the “unreliable fellow-travellers”. To speak of compromise at the present time when there is no question, and can be none, of sharing *power*, of renouncing the dictatorship of the proletariat over the bourgeoisie, is merely to repeat, parrot-fashion, words which have been learned by heart but not understood. To describe as “compromise” the fact that, having arrived at a situation when we can and must rule the country, we try to win over to our side, not grudging the cost, the most efficient people capitalism has trained and to take them into our service against small proprietary disintegration, reveals a total incapacity to think about the economic tasks of socialist construction.\*

\* See present edition, Vol. 2. pp. 631-41 —Ed.

## TAX IN KIND, FREEDOM TO TRADE AND CONCESSIONS

In the arguments of 1918 quoted above there are a number of mistakes as regards the periods of time involved. These turned out to be longer than was anticipated at that time. That is not surprising. But the basic elements of our economy have remained the same. In a very large number of cases the peasant "poor" (proletarians and semi-proletarians) have become middle peasants. This has caused an increase in the small-proprietor, petty-bourgeois "element". The Civil War of 1918-20 aggravated the havoc in the country, retarded the restoration of its productive forces, and bled the proletariat more than any other class. To this was added the 1920 crop failure, the fodder shortage and the loss of cattle, which still further retarded the rehabilitation of transport and industry, because, among other things, it interfered with the employment of peasants' horses for carting wood, our main type of fuel.

As a result, the political situation in the spring of 1921 was such that immediate, very resolute and urgent measures had to be taken to improve the condition of the peasants and to increase their productive forces.

Why the peasants and not the workers?

Because you need grain and fuel to improve the condition of the workers. This is the biggest "hitch" at the present time, from the standpoint of the economy as a whole. For it is impossible to increase the production and collection of grain and the storage and delivery of fuel except by improving the condition of the peasantry, and raising their productive forces. We must start with the peasantry. Those who fail to understand this, and think this putting the peasantry in the forefront is "renunciation" of the dictatorship of the proletariat, or something like that, simply do not stop to think, and allow themselves to be swayed by the power of words. The dictatorship of the proletariat is the direction of policy by the proletariat. The proletariat, as the leading and ruling class, must be able to direct policy in such a way as to solve first the most urgent and "vexed" problem. The most urgent thing at the present time is to take measures that will immediately increase the productive forces of peasant farming. Only *in this way* will it be possible to improve the condition of the workers, strengthen the alliance between the workers and peasants, and consolidate the dictatorship of the proletariat. The proletarian or representative of the proletariat who *refused* to improve the condition of the workers *in this way* would *in fact* prove himself to be an accomplice of the whiteguards and the capitalists;

to refuse to do it in this way means putting the craft interests of the workers above their class interests, and sacrificing the interests of the whole of the working class, its dictatorship, its alliance with the peasantry against the landowners and capitalists, and its leading role in the struggle for the emancipation of labour from the yoke of capital, for the sake of an immediate, short-term and partial advantage for the workers.

Thus, the first thing we need is immediate and serious measures to raise the productive forces of the peasantry.

This cannot be done without making important changes in our food policy. One such change was the replacement of the surplus appropriation system by the tax in kind, which implies a free market, at least in local economic exchange, after the tax has been paid.

What is the essence of this change?

Wrong ideas on this point are widespread. They are due mainly to the fact that no attempt is being made to study the meaning of the transition or to determine its implications, it being assumed that the change is from communism in general to the bourgeois system in general. To counteract this mistake, one has to refer to what was said in May 1918.

The tax in kind is one of the forms of transition from that peculiar War Communism, which was forced on us by extreme want, ruin and war, to regular socialist exchange of products. The latter, in its turn, is one of the forms of transition from socialism, with the peculiar features due to the predominantly small-peasant population, to communism.

Under this peculiar War Communism we actually took from the peasant all his surpluses—and sometimes even a part of his necessities—to meet the requirements of the army and sustain the workers. Most of it we took on loan, for paper money. But for that, we would not have beaten the landowners and capitalists in a ruined small-peasant country. The fact that we did (in spite of the help our exploiters got from the most powerful countries of the world) shows not only the miracles of heroism the workers and peasants can perform in the struggle for their emancipation; it also shows that when the Mensheviks, Socialist-Revolutionaries and Kautsky and Co. *blamed* us for this War Communism they were acting as lackeys of the bourgeoisie. We deserve credit for it.

Just how much credit is a fact of equal importance. It was the war and the ruin that forced us into War Communism. It was not, and could not be, a policy that corresponded to the economic tasks of the proletariat. It was a makeshift. The correct policy of the proletariat exercising its dictatorship in a small-peasant country is to obtain grain in exchange for the manufactured

goods the peasant needs. That is the only kind of food policy that corresponds to the tasks of the proletariat, and can strengthen the foundations of socialism and lead to its complete victory.

The tax in kind is a transition to this policy. We are still so ruined and crushed by the burden of war (which was on but yesterday and could break out anew tomorrow, owing to the rapacity and malice of the capitalists) that we cannot give the peasant manufactured goods in return for *all* the grain we need. Being aware of this, we are introducing the tax in kind, that is, we shall take the minimum of grain we require (for the army and the workers) in the form of a tax and obtain the rest in exchange for manufactured goods.

There is something else we must not forget. Our poverty and ruin are so great that we cannot restore large-scale socialist state industry *at one stroke*. This can be done with large stocks of grain and fuel in the big industrial centres, replacement of worn-out machinery, and so on. Experience has convinced us that this cannot be done at one stroke, and we know that after the ruinous imperialist war even the wealthiest and most advanced countries will be able to solve this problem only over a fairly long period of years. Hence, it is necessary, to a certain extent, to help to restore *small* industry, which does not demand of the state machines, large stocks of raw material, fuel and food, and which can immediately render some assistance to peasant farming and increase its productive forces right away.

What is to be the effect of all this?

It is the revival of the petty bourgeoisie and of capitalism on the basis of some freedom of trade (if only local). That much is certain and it is ridiculous to shut our eyes to it.

Is it necessary? Can it be justified? Is it not dangerous?

Many such questions are being asked, and most are merely evidence of simple-mindedness, to put it mildly.

Look at my May 1918 definition of the elements (constituent parts) of the various socio-economic structures\* in our economy. No one can deny the existence of all these five stages (or constituent parts), of the five forms of economy—from the patriarchal, i.e., semi-barbarian, to the socialist system. That the small-peasant "structure", partly patriarchal, partly petty-bourgeois, predominates in a small-peasant country is self-evident. It is an incontrovertible truth, elementary to political economy, which even the layman's everyday experience will confirm, that once you have exchange the small economy is bound to develop the petty-bourgeois, capitalist way.

What is the policy the socialist proletariat can pursue in the

face of this economic reality? Is it to give the small peasant *all* he needs of the goods produced by large-scale socialist industries in exchange for his grain and raw materials? This would be the most desirable and "correct" policy—and we have started on it. But we cannot supply *all* the goods, very far from it; nor shall we be able to do so very soon—at all events not until we complete the first stage of the electrification of the whole country. What is to be done? One way is to try to prohibit entirely, to put the lock on all development of private, non-state exchange, i.e., trade, i.e., capitalism, which is inevitable with millions of small producers. But such a policy would be foolish and suicidal for the party that tried to apply it. It would be foolish because it is economically impossible. It would be suicidal because the party that tried to apply it would meet with inevitable disaster. Let us admit it: some Communists have sinned "in thought, word and deed" by adopting just *such* a policy. We shall try to rectify these mistakes, and this must be done without fail, otherwise things will come to a very sorry state.

The alternative (and this is the only sensible and the last *possible* policy) is not to try to prohibit or put the lock on the development of capitalism, but to channel it into *state capitalism*. This is economically possible, for state capitalism exists—in varying form and degree—wherever there are elements of unrestricted trade and capitalism in general.

Can the Soviet state and the dictatorship of the proletariat be combined with state capitalism? Are they compatible?

Of course they are. This is exactly what I argued in May 1918. I hope I had proved it then. I had also proved that state capitalism is a step forward compared with the small-proprietor (both small-patriarchal and petty-bourgeois) element. Those who compare state capitalism only with socialism commit a host of mistakes, for in the present political and economic circumstances it is essential to compare state capitalism also with petty-bourgeois production.

The whole problem—in theoretical and practical terms—is to find the correct methods of directing the development of capitalism (which is to some extent and for some time inevitable) into the channels of state capitalism, and to determine how we are to hedge it about with conditions to ensure its transformation into socialism in the near future.

In order to approach the solution of this problem we must first of all picture to ourselves as distinctly as possible what state capitalism will and can be in practice inside the Soviet system and within the framework of the Soviet state.

Concessions are the simplest example of how the Soviet government directs the development of capitalism into the channels of



state capitalism and "implants" state capitalism. We all agree now that concessions are necessary, but have we all thought about the implications? What are concessions under the Soviet system, viewed in the light of the above-mentioned forms of economy and their inter-relations? They are an agreement, an alliance, a bloc between the Soviet, i.e., proletarian, state power and state capitalism against the small-proprietor (patriarchal and petty-bourgeois) element. The concessionaire is a capitalist. He conducts his business on capitalist lines, for profit, and is willing to enter into an agreement with the proletarian government in order to obtain superprofits or raw materials which he cannot otherwise obtain, or can obtain only with great difficulty. Soviet power gains by the development of the productive forces, and by securing an increased quantity of goods immediately, or within a very short period. We have, say, a hundred oilfields, mines and forest tracts. We cannot develop all of them for we lack the machines, the food and the transport. This is also why we are doing next 'o nothing to develop the other territories. Owing to the insufficient development of the large enterprises the small-proprietor element is more pronounced in all its forms, and this is reflected in the deterioration of the surrounding (and later the whole of) peasant farming, the disruption of its productive forces, the decline in its confidence in the Soviet power, pilfering and widespread petty (the most dangerous) profiteering, etc. By "implanting" state capitalism in the form of concessions, the Soviet government strengthens large-scale production as against petty production, advanced production as against backward production, and machine production as against hand production. It also obtains a larger quantity of the products of large-scale industry (its share of the output), and strengthens state-regulated economic relations as against the anarchy of petty-bourgeois relations. The moderate and cautious application of the concessions policy will undoubtedly help us quickly to improve (to a modest extent) the state of industry and the condition of the workers and peasants. We shall, of course, have all this at the price of certain sacrifices and the surrender to the capitalist of many millions of poods of very valuable products. The scale and the conditions under which concessions cease to be a danger and are turned to our advantage depend on the relation of forces and are decided in the struggle, for concessions are also a form of struggle, and are a continuation of the class struggle in another form, and in no circumstances are they a substitution of class peace for class war. Practice will determine the methods of struggle.

Compared with other forms of state capitalism within the Soviet system, concessions are perhaps the most simple and clear-cut form of state capitalism. It involves a formal written agreement

with the most civilised, advanced, West-European capitalism. We know exactly what our gains and our losses, our rights and obligations are. We know exactly the term for which the concession is granted. We know the terms of redemption before the expiry of the agreement if it provides for such redemption. We pay a certain "tribute" to world capitalism; we "ransom" ourselves under certain arrangements, thereby immediately stabilising the Soviet power and improving our economic conditions. The whole difficulty with concessions is giving the proper consideration and appraisal of all the circumstances when concluding a concession agreement, and then seeing that it is fulfilled. Difficulties there certainly are, and mistakes will probably be inevitable at the outset. But these are minor difficulties compared with the other problems of the social revolution and, in particular, with the difficulties arising from other forms of developing, permitting and implanting state capitalism.

The most important task that confronts all Party and Soviet workers in connection with the introduction of the tax in kind is to apply the principles of the "concessions" policy (i.e., a policy that is similar to "concession" state capitalism) to the other forms of capitalism—unrestricted trade, local exchange, etc.

Take the co-operatives. It is not surprising that the tax in kind decree immediately necessitated a revision of the regulations governing the co-operatives and a certain extension of their "freedom" and rights. The co-operatives are also a form of state capitalism, but a less simple one; its outline is less distinct, it is more intricate and therefore creates greater practical difficulties for the government. The small commodity producers' co-operatives (and it is these, and not the workers' co-operatives, that we are discussing as the predominant and typical form in a small-peasant country) inevitably give rise to petty-bourgeois, capitalist relations, facilitate their development, push the small capitalists into the foreground and benefit them most. It cannot be otherwise, since the small proprietors predominate, and exchange is necessary and possible. In Russia's present conditions, freedom and rights for the co-operative societies mean freedom and rights for capitalism. It would be stupid or criminal to close our eyes to this obvious truth.

But, unlike private capitalism, "co-operative" capitalism under the Soviet system is a variety of state capitalism, and as such it is advantageous and useful for us at the present time—in certain measure, of course. Since the tax in kind means the free sale of surplus grain (over and above that taken in the form of the tax), we must exert every effort to direct *this* development of capitalism—for a free market is development of capitalism—into the channels of co-operative capitalism. It resembles state capitalism

in that it facilitates accounting, control, supervision and the establishment of contractual relations between the state (in this case the Soviet state) and the capitalist. Co-operative trade is more advantageous and useful than private trade not only for the above-mentioned reasons, but also because it facilitates the association and organisation of millions of people, and eventually of the entire population, and this in its turn is an enormous gain from the standpoint of the subsequent transition from state capitalism to socialism.

Let us make a comparison of concessions and co-operatives as forms of state capitalism. Concessions are based on large-scale machine industry; co-operatives are based on small, handicraft, and partly even on patriarchal industry. Each concession agreement affects one capitalist, firm, syndicate, cartel or trust. Co-operative societies embrace many thousands and even millions of small proprietors. Concessions allow and even imply a definite agreement for a specified period. Co-operative societies allow of neither. It is much easier to repeal the law on the co-operatives than to annul a concession agreement, but the annulment of an agreement means a sudden rupture of the practical relations of economic alliance, or economic coexistence, with the capitalist, whereas the repeal of the law on the co-operatives, or any law, for that matter, does not immediately break off the practical coexistence of Soviet power and the small capitalists, nor, in general, is it able to break off the actual economic relations. It is easy to "keep an eye" on a concessionaire but not on the co-operators. The transition from concessions to socialism is a transition from one form of large-scale production to another. The transition from small-proprietor co-operatives to socialism is a transition from small to large-scale production, i.e., it is more complicated, but, if successful, is capable of embracing wider masses of the population, and pulling up the deeper and more tenacious roots of the old, pre-socialist and even pre-capitalist relations, which most stubbornly resist all "innovations". The concessions policy, if successful, will give us a few model—compared with our own—large enterprises built on the level of modern advanced capitalism. After a few decades these enterprises will revert to us in their entirety. The co-operative policy, if successful, will result in raising the small economy and in facilitating its transition, within an indefinite period, to large-scale production on the basis of voluntary association.

Take a third form of state capitalism. The state enlists the capitalist as a merchant and pays him a definite commission on the sale of state goods and on the purchase of the produce of the small producer. A fourth form: the state leases to the capitalist entrepreneur an industrial establishment, oilfields, forest tracts,

land, etc., which belong to the state, the lease being very similar to a concession agreement. We make no mention of, we give no thought or notice to, these two latter forms of state capitalism, not because we are strong and clever but because we are weak and foolish. We are afraid to look the "vulgar truth" squarely in the face, and too often yield to "exalting deception".<sup>226</sup> We keep repeating that "we" are passing from capitalism to socialism, but do not bother to obtain a distinct picture of the "we". To keep this picture clear we must constantly have in mind the whole list—without any exception—of the constituent parts of our national economy, of all its diverse forms that I gave in my article of May 5, 1918.\* "We", the vanguard, the advanced contingent of the proletariat, are passing directly to socialism; but the advanced contingent is only a small part of the whole of the proletariat while the latter, in its turn, is only a small part of the whole population. If "we" are successfully to solve the problem of our immediate transition to socialism, we must understand what *intermediary* paths, methods, means and instruments are required for the transition from *pre-capitalist* relations to socialism. That is the whole point.

Look at the map of the R.S.F.S.R. There is room for dozens of large civilised states in those vast areas which lie to the north of Vologda, the south-east of Rostov-on-Don and Saratov, the south of Orenburg and Omsk, and the north of Tomsk. They are a realm of patriarchalism, and semi- and downright barbarism. And what about the peasant backwoods of the rest of Russia, where scores of versts of country track, or rather of trackless country, lie between the villages and the railways, i.e., the material link with the big cities, large-scale industry, capitalism and culture? Isn't that also an area of wholesale patriarchalism, Oblomovism<sup>227</sup> and semi-barbarism?

Is an immediate transition to socialism from the state of affairs predominating in Russia conceivable? Yes, it is, to a certain degree, but on one condition, the precise nature of which we now know thanks to a great piece of scientific work<sup>228</sup> that has been completed. It is electrification. If we construct scores of district electric power stations (we now know where and how these can and should be constructed), and transmit electric power to every village, if we obtain a sufficient number of electric motors and other machinery, we shall not need, or shall hardly need, any transition stages or intermediary links between patriarchalism and socialism. But we know perfectly well that it will take at least ten years only to complete the first stage of this "one" condition; this period can be conceivably reduced only if the proletarian revo-

lution is victorious in such countries as Britain, Germany or the U.S.A.

Over the next few years we must learn to think of the intermediary links that can facilitate the transition from patriarchalism and small production to socialism. "We" continue saying now and again that "capitalism is a bane and socialism is a boon". But such an argument is wrong, because it fails to take into account the aggregate of the existing economic forms and singles out only two of them.

Capitalism is a bane compared with socialism. Capitalism is a boon compared with medievalism, small production, and the evils of bureaucracy which spring from the dispersal of the small producers. Inasmuch as we are as yet unable to pass directly from small production to socialism, some capitalism is inevitable as the elemental product of small production and exchange; so that we must utilise capitalism (particularly by directing it into the channels of state capitalism) as the intermediary link between small production and socialism, as a means, a path, and a method of increasing the productive forces.

Look at the economic aspect of the evils of bureaucracy. We see nothing of them on May 5, 1918. Six months after the October Revolution, with the old bureaucratic apparatus smashed from top to bottom, we feel none of its evils.

A year later, the Eighth Congress of the Russian Communist Party (March 18-23, 1919) adopted a new Party Programme in which we spoke forthrightly of "*a partial revival of bureaucracy within the Soviet system*"—not fearing to admit the evil, but desiring to reveal, expose and pillory it and to stimulate thought, will, energy and action to combat it.

Two years later, in the spring of 1921, after the Eighth Congress of Soviets (December 1920), which discussed the evils of bureaucracy, and after the Tenth Congress of the Russian Communist Party (March 1921), which summed up the controversies closely connected with an analysis of these evils, we find *them* even more distinct and sinister. What are their economic roots? They are mostly of a dual character: on the one hand, a developed bourgeoisie needs a bureaucratic apparatus, primarily a military apparatus, and then a judiciary, etc., to use against the revolutionary movement of the workers (and partly of the peasants). That is something we have not got. Ours are class courts directed against the bourgeoisie. Ours is a class army directed against the bourgeoisie. The evils of bureaucracy are not in the army, but in the institutions serving it. In our country bureaucratic practices have different economic roots, namely, the atomised and scattered state of the small producer with his poverty, illiteracy, lack of culture, the absence of roads and *exchange* between agriculture and indus-

try, the absence of connection and interaction between them. This is largely the result of the Civil War. We could not restore industry when we were blockaded, besieged on all sides, cut off from the whole world and later from the grain-bearing South, Siberia, and the coalfields. We could not afford to hesitate in introducing War Communism, or daring to go to the most desperate extremes: to save the workers' and peasants' rule we had to suffer an existence of semi-starvation and worse than semi-starvation, but to hold on at all costs, in spite of unprecedented ruin and the absence of economic intercourse. We did not allow ourselves to be frightened, as the Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks did (who, in fact, followed the bourgeoisie largely because they were scared). But the factor that was crucial to victory in a blockaded country—a besieged fortress—revealed its negative side by the spring of 1921, just when the last of the whiteguard forces were finally driven from the territory of the RSFSR. In the besieged fortress, it was possible and imperative to "lock up" all exchange; with the masses displaying extraordinary heroism this could be borne for three years. After that, the ruin of the small producer increased, and the restoration of large-scale industry was further delayed and postponed. Bureaucratic practices, as a legacy of the "siege" and the superstructure built over the isolated and downtrodden state of the small producer, fully revealed themselves.

We must learn to admit an evil fearlessly in order to combat it the more firmly, in order to start from scratch again and again; we shall have to do this many a time in every sphere of our activity, finish what was left undone and choose different approaches to the problem. In view of the obvious delay in the restoration of large-scale industry, the "locking up" of exchange between industry and agriculture has become intolerable. Consequently, we must concentrate on what we can do: restoring small industry, helping things from that end, propping up the side of the structure that has been half-demolished by the war and blockade. We must do everything possible to develop trade at all costs, without being afraid of capitalism, because the limits we have put to it (the expropriation of the landowners and of the bourgeoisie in the economy, the rule of the workers and peasants in politics) are sufficiently narrow and "moderate". This is the fundamental idea and economic significance of the tax in kind.

All Party and Soviet workers must concentrate their efforts and attention on generating the utmost local initiative in economic development—in the gubernias, still more in the uyezds, still more in the volosts and villages—for the special purpose of immediately improving peasant farming, even if by "small" means, on a small scale, helping it by developing small local industry.

The integrated state economic plan demands that this should become the focus of concern and "priority" effort. Some improvement here, closest to the broadest and deepest "foundation", will permit of the speediest transition to a more vigorous and successful restoration of large-scale industry.

Hitherto the food supply worker has known only one fundamental instruction: collect 100 per cent of the grain appropriations. Now he has another instruction: collect 100 per cent of the tax in the shortest possible time and then collect another 100 per cent in exchange for the goods of large-scale *and small* industry. Those who collect 75 per cent of the tax and 75 per cent (of the second hundred) in exchange for the goods of large-scale and small industry will be doing more useful work of national importance than those who collect 100 per cent of the tax and 55 per cent (of the second hundred) by means of exchange. The task of the food supply worker now becomes more complicated. On the one hand, it is a fiscal task: collect the tax as quickly and as efficiently as possible. On the other hand, it is a general economic task: try to direct the co-operatives, assist small industry, develop local initiative in such a way as to increase the exchange between agriculture and industry and put it on a sound basis. Our bureaucratic practices prove that we are still doing a very bad job of it. We must not be afraid to admit that in this respect *we still have a great deal to learn from the capitalist*. We shall compare the practical experience of the various gubernias, uyezds, volosts and villages: in one place private capitalists, big and small, have achieved so much; those are their approximate profits. That is the tribute, the fee, we have to pay for the "schooling". We shall not mind paying for it if we learn a thing or two. That much has been achieved in a neighbouring locality through co-operation. Those are the profits of the co-operatives. And in a third place, that much has been achieved by purely state and communist methods (for the present, this third case will be a rare exception).

It should be the primary task to every regional economic centre and economic conference of the gubernia executive committees<sup>229</sup> immediately to organise various experiments, or systems of "exchange" for the surplus stocks remaining after the tax in kind has been paid. In a few months' time practical results must be obtained for comparison and study. Local or imported salt; paraffin oil from the nearest town; the handicraft wood-working industry; handicrafts using local raw materials and producing certain, perhaps not very important, but necessary and useful, articles for the peasants; "green coal" (the utilisation of small local water power resources for electrification), and so on and so forth—all this must be brought into play in order to stimulate exchange between industry and agriculture at all costs. Those who

achieve the best results in this sphere, even by means of private capitalism, even without the co-operatives, or without directly transforming this capitalism into state capitalism, will do more for the cause of socialist construction in Russia than those who "ponder over" the purity of communism, draw up regulations, rules and instructions for state capitalism and the co-operatives, but do nothing practical to stimulate trade.

Isn't it paradoxical that private capital should be helping socialism?

Not at all. It is, indeed, an irrefutable economic fact. Since this is a small-peasant country with transport in an extreme state of dislocation, a country emerging from war and blockade under the political guidance of the proletariat—which controls the transport system and large-scale industry—it inevitably follows, first, that at the present moment local exchange acquires first-class significance, and, second, that there is a possibility of assisting socialism by means of private capitalism (not to speak of state capitalism).

Let's not quibble about words. We still have too much of that sort of thing. We must have more variety in practical experience and make a wider study of it. In certain circumstances, the exemplary organisation of local work, even on the smallest scale, is of far greater national importance than many branches of central state work. These are precisely the circumstances now prevailing in peasant farming in general, and in regard to the exchange of the surplus products of agriculture for industrial goods in particular. Exemplary organisation in this respect, even in a single volost, is of far greater national importance than the "exemplary" improvement of the central apparatus of any People's Commissariat; over the past three and a half years our central apparatus has been built up to such an extent that it has managed to acquire a certain amount of harmful routine; we cannot improve it quickly to any extent, we do not know how to do it. Assistance in the work of radically improving it, securing an influx of fresh forces, combating bureaucratic practices effectively and overcoming this harmful routine must come from the localities and the lower ranks, with the model organisation of a "complex", even if on a small scale. I say "complex", meaning not just one farm, one branch of industry, or one factory, but a *totality* of economic relations, a *totality* of economic exchange, even if only in a small locality.

Those of us who are doomed to remain at work in the centre will continue the task of improving the apparatus and purging it of bureaucratic evils, even if only on a modest and immediately achievable scale. But the greatest assistance in this task is coming, and will come, from the localities. Generally speaking, as far



as I can observe, things are better in the localities than at the centre; and this is understandable, for, naturally, the evils of bureaucracy are concentrated at the centre. In this respect, Moscow cannot but be the worst city, and in general the worst "locality", in the Republic. In the localities we have deviations from the average to the good and the bad sides, the latter being less frequent than the former. The deviations towards the bad side are the abuses committed by former government officials, landowners, bourgeois and other scum who play up to the Communists and who sometimes commit abominable outrages and acts of tyranny against the peasantry. This calls for a terrorist purge, summary trial and the firing squad. Let the Martovs, the Chernovs, and non-Party philistines like them, beat their breasts and exclaim: "I thank Thee, Lord, that I am not as 'these', and have never accepted terrorism." These simpletons "do not accept terrorism" because they choose to be servile accomplices of the whiteguards in fooling the workers and peasants. The Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks "do not accept terrorism" because under the flag of "socialism" they are fulfilling their function of *placing the masses at the mercy of the whiteguard terrorism*. This was proved by the Kerensky regime and the Kornilov putsch in Russia, by the Kolchak regime in Siberia, and by Menshevism in Georgia. It was proved by the heroes of the Second International and of the "Two-and-a-Half" International in Finland, Hungary, Austria, Germany, Italy, Britain, etc. Let the flunkey accomplices of whiteguard terrorism wallow in their repudiation of all terrorism. We shall speak the bitter and indubitable truth: in countries beset by an unprecedented crisis, the collapse of old ties, and the intensification of the class struggle after the imperialist war of 1914-18—and that means all the countries of the world—terrorism cannot be dispensed with, notwithstanding the hypocrites and phrase-mongers. Either the whiteguard, bourgeois terrorism of the American, British (Ireland), Italian (the fascists), German, Hungarian and other types, or Red, proletarian terrorism. There is no middle course, no "third" course, nor can there be any.

The deviations towards the good side are the success achieved in combating the evils of bureaucracy, the great attention shown for the needs of the workers and peasants, and the great care in developing the economy, raising the productivity of labour and stimulating local exchange between agriculture and industry. Although the good examples are more numerous than the bad ones, they are, nevertheless, rare. Still, they are there. Young, fresh communist forces, steeled by civil war and privation, are coming forward in all localities. We are still doing far too little to promote these forces regularly from lower to higher posts. This can and must be done more persistently, and on a wider scale

than at present. Some workers can and should be transferred from work at the centre to local work. As leading men of uyezds, and of *volosts*, where they can organise economic work *as a whole* on *exemplary* lines, they will do far more good, and perform work of far greater *national* importance, than by performing some function at the centre. The exemplary organisation of the work will help to train new workers and provide examples that other districts could follow with relative ease. We at the centre shall be able to do a great deal to encourage the other districts all over the country to "follow" the good examples, and even make it mandatory for them to do so.

By its very nature, the work of developing "exchange" between agriculture and industry, the exchange of after-tax surpluses for the output of small, mainly handicraft, industry, calls for independent, competent and intelligent *local initiative*. That is why it is now extremely important from the national standpoint to organise the work in the uyezds and volosts on exemplary lines. In military affairs, during the last Polish war, for example, we were not afraid of departing from bureaucratic hierarchy, "downgrading", or transferring members of the Revolutionary Military Council of the Republic to lower posts (while allowing them to retain their higher rank at the centre) Why not now transfer several members of the All-Russia Central Executive Committee, or members of collegiums, or other high-ranking comrades, to uyezd or even volost work? Surely, we have not become so "bureaucratised" as to "be ashamed" of that. And we shall find scores of workers in the central bodies who will be glad to accept. The economic development of the whole Republic will gain enormously; and the exemplary volosts, or uyezds, will play not only a great, but a positively crucial and historic role.

Incidentally, we should note as a small but significant circumstance the necessary change in our attitude to the problem of combating profiteering. We must foster "proper" trade, which is one that does not evade state control; it is to our advantage to develop it. But profiteering, in its politico-economic sense, *cannot* be distinguished from "proper" trade. Freedom to trade is capitalism; capitalism is profiteering. It would be ridiculous to ignore this.

What then should be done? Shall we declare profiteering to be no longer punishable?

No. We must revise and redraft all the laws on profiteering, and declare all *pilfering* and every direct or indirect, open or concealed *evasion of state control, supervision and accounting* to be a punishable offence (and in fact prosecuted with redoubled severity). It is by presenting the question in this way (the Council

of People's Commissars has already started, that is to say, it has ordered that work be started, on the revision of the anti-profiteering laws) that we shall succeed in directing the rather inevitable but necessary development of capitalism into the channels of *state* capitalism.

## POLITICAL SUMMARY AND DEDUCTIONS

I still have to deal, if briefly, with the political situation, and the way it has taken shape and changed in connection with the economic developments outlined above

I have already said that the fundamental features of our economy in 1921 are the same as those in 1918. The spring of 1921, mainly as a result of the crop failure and the loss of cattle, brought a sharp deterioration in the condition of the peasantry, which was bad enough because of the war and blockade. This resulted in political vacillations which, generally speaking, express the very "nature" of the small producer. Their most striking expression was the Kronstadt mutiny.

The vacillation of the petty-bourgeois element was the most characteristic feature of the Kronstadt events. There was very little that was clear, definite and fully shaped. We heard nebulous slogans about "freedom", "freedom to trade", "emancipation", "Soviets without the Bolsheviks", or new elections to the Soviets, or relief from "Party dictatorship", and so on and so forth. Both the Mensheviks and the Socialist-Revolutionaries declared the Kronstadt movement to be "their own". Victor Chernov sent a messenger to Kronstadt. On the latter's proposal, the Menshevik Valk, one of the Kronstadt leaders, voted for the *Constituent Assembly*. In a flash, with lightning speed, you might say, the whiteguards mobilised all their forces "*for Kronstadt*". Their military experts in Kronstadt, a number of experts, and not Kozlovsky alone, drew up a plan for a landing at Oranienbaum, which scared the vacillating mass of Mensheviks, Socialist-Revolutionaries and non-party elements. More than fifty Russian whiteguard newspapers published abroad conducted a rabid campaign "*for Kronstadt*". The big banks, all the forces of finance capital, collected funds to assist Kronstadt. That shrewd leader of the bourgeoisie and the landowners, the Cadet Milyukov, patiently explained to the simpleton Victor Chernov directly (and to the Mensheviks Dan and Rozhkov, who are in jail in Petrograd for their connection with the Kronstadt events, indirectly) that there is no need to hurry with the Constituent Assembly, and that *Soviet power* can and must be supported—*only without the Bolsheviks*.

Of course, it is easy to be cleverer than conceited simpletons like Chernov, the petty-bourgeois phrase-monger, or like Martov, the knight of philistine reformism doctored to pass for Marxism. Properly speaking, the point is not that Milyukov, as an individual, has more brains, but that, because of his class position, the party leader of the big bourgeoisie sees and understands the class essence and political interaction of things more clearly than the leaders of the petty bourgeoisie, the Chernovs and Martovs. For the bourgeoisie is really a class force which, under capitalism, inevitably rules both under a monarchy and in the most democratic republic, and which also inevitably enjoys the support of the world bourgeoisie. But the petty bourgeoisie, i.e., all the heroes of the Second International and of the "Two-and-a-Half" International, cannot, by the very economic nature of things, be anything else than the expression of class impotence; hence the vacillation, phrase-mongering and helplessness. In 1789, the petty bourgeois could still be great revolutionaries. In 1848, they were ridiculous and pathetic. Their actual role in 1917-21 is that of abominable agents and out-and-out servitors of reaction, be their names Chernov, Martov, Kautsky, MacDonald, or what have you.

Martov showed himself to be nothing but a philistine Narcissus when he declared in his Berlin journal<sup>230</sup> that Kronstadt not only adopted Menshevik slogans but also proved that there could be an anti-Bolshevik movement which did not entirely serve the interests of the whiteguards, the capitalists and the landowners. He says in effect: "Let us shut our eyes to the fact that all the genuine whiteguards hailed the Kronstadt mutineers and collected funds in aid of Kronstadt through the banks!" Compared with the Chernovs and Martovs, Milyukov is right, for he is revealing the *true* tactics of the *real* whiteguard force, the force of the capitalists and landowners. He declares: "It does not matter whom we support, be they anarchists or any sort of Soviet government, *as long as the Bolsheviks are overthrown, as long as there is a shift in power*; it does not matter whether to the right or to the left, to the Mensheviks or to the anarchists, as long as it is away from the Bolsheviks. As for the rest—'we', the Milyukovs, 'we', the capitalists and landowners, will do the rest 'ourselves', we shall slap down the anarchist pygmies, the Chernovs and the Martovs, as we did Chernov and Maisky in Siberia, the Hungarian Chernovs and Martovs in Hungary, Kautsky in Germany and the Friedrich Adlers and Co. in Vienna." The real, hard-headed bourgeoisie have made fools of hundreds of these philistine Narcissuses—whether Menshevik, Socialist-Revolutionary or non-party—and have driven them out scores of times in all revolutions in all countries. History proves it. The facts bear it out. The Narcissuses will talk; the Milyukovs and whiteguards will act.

Milyukov is absolutely right when he says, "If only there is a power shift away from the Bolsheviks, no matter whether it is a little to the right or to the left, the rest will take care of itself." This is class truth, confirmed by the history of revolutions in all countries, and by the centuries of modern history since the Middle Ages. The scattered small producers, the peasants, are economically *and politically* united either by the bourgeoisie (this has always been—and will always be—the case under capitalism in all countries, in all modern revolutions), or by the proletariat (that was the case in a rudimentary form for a very short period at the peak of some of the greatest revolutions in modern history; that has been the case in Russia in a more developed form in 1917-21). Only the Narcissuses will talk and dream about a "third" path, and a "third force".

With enormous difficulty, and in the course of desperate struggles, the Bolsheviks have trained a proletarian vanguard that is capable of governing; they have created and successfully defended the dictatorship of the proletariat. After the test of four years of practical experience, the relation of class forces in Russia has become as clear as day: the steeled and tempered vanguard of the only revolutionary class; the vacillating petty-bourgeois element; and the Milyukovs, the capitalists and landowners, lying in wait abroad and supported by the world bourgeoisie. It is crystal-clear: only the latter are able to take advantage of any "shift of power", and will certainly do so.

In the 1918 pamphlet I quoted above, this point was put very clearly: "the principal enemy" is the "petty-bourgeois element". "Either we subordinate it to our control and accounting, or it will overthrow the workers' power as surely and as inevitably as the revolution was overthrown by the Napoleons and the Cavaignacs who sprang from this very soil of petty proprietorship. This is how the question stands. That is the only view we can take of the matter." (Excerpt from the pamphlet of May 5, 1918, cf. above.)\*

Our strength lies in complete clarity and the sober consideration of *all* the existing class magnitudes, both Russian and international; and in the inexhaustible energy, iron resolve and devotion in struggle that arise from this. We have many enemies, but they are disunited, or do not know their own minds (like all the petty bourgeoisie, all the Martovs and Chernovs, all the non-party elements and anarchists). But we are united—directly among ourselves and indirectly with the proletarians of all countries; we know just what we want. That is why we are invincible on a world scale, although this does not in the least preclude the possi-

\* See present edition, Vol. 2, p. 633—Ed.

bility of defeat for individual proletarian revolutions for longer or shorter periods.

There is good reason for calling the petty-bourgeois element an element, for it is indeed something that is most amorphous, indefinite and unconscious. The petty-bourgeois Narcissuses imagine that "universal suffrage" abolishes the nature of the small producer under capitalism. As a matter of fact, it *helps* the bourgeoisie, through the church, the press, the teachers, the police, the militarists and a thousand and one forms of economic oppression, to *subordinate* the scattered small producers. Ruin, want and the hard conditions of life give rise to vacillation: one day for the bourgeoisie, the next, for the proletariat. Only the steeled proletarian vanguard is capable of withstanding and overcoming this vacillation.

The events of the spring of 1921 once again revealed the role of the Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks: they help the vacillating petty-bourgeois element to recoil from the Bolsheviks, to cause a "shift of power" in favour of the capitalists and landowners. *The Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries have now learned to don the "non-party" disguise.* This has been fully proved. Only fools now fail to see this and understand that we must not allow ourselves to be fooled. Non-Party conferences are not a fetish. They are valuable if they help us to come closer to the impassive masses—the millions of working people still outside politics. They are harmful if they provide a platform for the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries masquerading as "non-party" men. They are helping the mutinies, and the whiteguards. The place for Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries, avowed or in non-party guise, is not at a non-Party conference but in prison (or on foreign journals, side by side with the whiteguards; we were glad to let Martov go abroad). We can and must find other methods of testing the mood of the masses and coming closer to them. We suggest that those who want to play the parliamentary, constituent assembly and non-party conference game, should go abroad; over there, by Martov's side, they can try the charms of "democracy" and ask Wrangel's soldiers about them. We have no time for this "opposition" at "conferences" game. We are surrounded by the world bourgeoisie, who are watching for every sign of vacillation in order to bring back "their own men", and restore the landowners and the bourgeoisie. We will keep in prison the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries, whether avowed or in "non-party" guise.

We shall employ every means to establish closer contacts with the masses of working people untouched by politics—except such means as give scope to the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries, and the *vacillations that benefit Milyukov*. In particular, we

shall zealously draw into Soviet work, primarily economic work, hundreds upon hundreds of non-Party people, real non-Party people from the masses, the rank and file of workers and peasants, and not those who have adopted non-party colours in order to crib Menshevik and Socialist-Revolutionary instructions which are so much to Milyukov's advantage. Hundreds and thousands of non-Party people are working for us, and scores occupy very important and responsible posts. We must pay more attention to the way they work. We must do more to promote and test thousands and thousands of rank-and-file workers, to try them out systematically and persistently, and appoint hundreds of them to higher posts, if experience shows that they can fill them.

Our Communists still do not have a sufficient understanding of their real duties of administration: they should not strive to do "everything themselves", running themselves down and failing to cope with everything, undertaking twenty jobs and finishing none. They should check up on the work of scores and hundreds of assistants, arrange to have their work checked up from below, i.e., by the real masses. They should *direct* the work and *learn* from those who have the knowledge (the specialists) and the experience in organising large-scale production (the capitalists). The intelligent Communist will not be afraid to learn from the military expert, although nine-tenths of the military experts are capable of treachery at every opportunity. The wise Communist will not be afraid to learn from a capitalist (whether a big capitalist concessionaire, a commission agent, or a petty capitalist co-operator, etc.), although the capitalist is no better than the military expert. Did we not learn to catch treacherous military experts in the Red Army, to bring out the honest and conscientious, and, on the whole, to utilise thousands and tens of thousands of military experts? We are learning to do the same thing (in an unconventional way) with engineers and teachers, although we are not doing it as well as we did it in the Red Army (there Denikin and Kolchak spurred us on, compelled us to learn more quickly, diligently and intelligently). We shall also learn to do it (again in an unconventional way) with the commission agents, with the buyers working for the state, the petty capitalist co-operators, the entrepreneur concessionaires, etc.

The condition of the masses of workers and peasants needs to be improved right away. And we shall achieve this by putting new forces, including non-Party forces, to useful work. The tax in kind, and a number of measures connected with it, will facilitate this; we shall thereby cut at the economic root of the small producer's inevitable vacillations. And we shall ruthlessly fight the political vacillations, which benefit no one but Milyukov. The waverers are many, we are few. The waverers are disunited, we

are united. The waverers are not economically independent, the proletariat is. The waverers don't know their own minds: they want to do something very badly, but Milyukov won't let them. We know what we want.

And that is why we shall win.

## CONCLUSION

To sum up.

The tax in kind is a transition from War Communism to a regular socialist exchange of products.

The extreme ruin rendered more acute by the crop failure in 1920 has made this transition urgently necessary owing to the fact that it was impossible to restore large-scale industry rapidly.

Hence, the first thing to do is to improve the condition of the peasants. The means are the tax in kind, the development of exchange between agriculture and industry, and the development of small industry.

Exchange is freedom to trade; it is capitalism. It is useful to us inasmuch as it will help us overcome the dispersal of the small producer, and to a certain degree combat the evils of bureaucracy: to what extent this can be done will be determined by practical experience. The proletarian power is in no danger, as long as the proletariat firmly holds power in its hands, and has full control of transport and large-scale industry.

The fight against profiteering must be transformed into a fight against stealing and the evasion of state supervision, accounting and control. By means of this control we shall direct the capitalism that is to a certain extent inevitable and necessary for us into the channels of state capitalism.

The development of local initiative and independent action in encouraging exchange between agriculture and industry must be given the fullest scope at all costs. The practical experience gained must be studied; and this experience must be made as varied as possible.

We must give assistance to small industry servicing peasant farming and helping to improve it. To some extent, this assistance may be given in the form of raw materials from the state stocks. It would be most criminal to leave these raw materials unprocessed.

We must not be afraid of Communists "learning" from bourgeois experts, including merchants, petty capitalist co-operators and capitalists, in the same way as we learned from the military experts, though in a different form. The results of the "learning" must be tested only by practical experience and by doing things



better than the bourgeois experts at your side; try in every way to secure an improvement in agriculture and industry, and to develop exchange between them. Do not grudge them the "tuition" fee: none will be too high, provided we learn something.

Do everything to help the masses of working people, to come closer to them, and to promote from their ranks hundreds and thousands of non-Party people for the work of economic administration. As for the "non-party" people who are only Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries disguised in fashionable non-party attire *à la* Kronstadt, they should be kept safe in prison, or packed off to Berlin, to join Martov in freely enjoying all the charms of pure democracy and freely exchanging ideas with Chernov, Milyukov and the Georgian Mensheviks.

April 21, 1921

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## **TENTH ALL-RUSSIA CONFERENCE OF THE R.C.P.(B.)**

**MAY 26-28, 1921**

### **SPEECH IN CLOSING THE CONFERENCE MAY 28**

Comrades, I think that I can confine myself to a very short speech. As you are aware, we convened this special conference mainly for the purpose of achieving complete understanding on economic policy between the centre and the localities, among Party and all Soviet workers. I think that the conference has fully achieved its object. Some speakers noted that Comrade Osinsky gave the correct expression to the feelings of very many, probably, the majority of local Party workers when he said that we must remove all doubt about the fact that the policy adopted by the Tenth Party Congress and subsequently reinforced by decrees and orders has unquestionably been accepted by the Party in earnest and for a long time. This is what the conference most emphatically expressed and amplified by a number of points. When the comrades return to their localities, not the slightest possibility of wrong interpretation will remain. Of course, in adopting a policy to be pursued over a number of years we do not for a moment forget that everything may be altered by the international revolution, its rate of development and the circumstances accompanying it. The current international situation is such that some sort of a temporary, unstable equilibrium, but equilibrium for all that, has been established; it is the kind of equilibrium under which the imperialist powers have been compelled to abandon their desire to hurl themselves at Soviet Russia, despite their hatred for her, because the disintegration of the capitalist world is steadily progressing, unity is steadily diminishing, while the onslaught of the forces of the oppressed colonies, which have a population of over a thousand million, is increasing from year to year, month to month, and even week to week. But we can make no conjectures on this score. We are now exercising our main influence on the international revolution through our economic policy. The working people of all countries without exception and without exaggeration are looking to the Soviet Russian Republic. This much has been achieved. The capitalists cannot hush up or conceal anything. That is why they so eagerly catch at our every economic mistake and weakness. The struggle in this field has

now become global. Once we solve this problem, we shall have certainly and finally won on an international scale. That is why for us questions of economic development become of absolutely exceptional importance. On this front, we must achieve victory by a steady rise and progress which must be gradual and necessarily slow. I think that as a result of the work of our conference we shall certainly achieve this goal. (*Applause.*)

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June 2, 1921

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pp. 436-37

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# **THIRD CONGRESS OF THE COMMUNIST INTERNATIONAL<sup>231</sup>**

**JUNE 22-JULY 12, 1921**

## **1**

### **THESES FOR A REPORT ON THE TACTICS OF THE R.C.P.**

#### **1. THE INTERNATIONAL POSITION OF THE R.S.F.S.R.**

The international position of the R.S.F.S.R. at present is distinguished by a certain equilibrium, which, although extremely unstable, has nevertheless given rise to a peculiar state of affairs in world politics.

This peculiarity is the following. On the one hand, the international bourgeoisie is filled with furious hatred of, and hostility towards Soviet Russia, and is prepared at any moment to fling itself upon her in order to strangle her. On the other hand, all attempts at military intervention, which have cost the international bourgeoisie hundreds of millions of francs, ended in complete failure, in spite of the fact that the Soviet power was then weaker than it is now and that the Russian landowners and capitalists had whole armies on the territory of the R.S.F.S.R. Opposition to the war against Soviet Russia has grown considerably in all capitalist countries, adding fuel to the revolutionary movement of the proletariat and extending to very wide sections of the petty-bourgeois democrats. The conflict of interests between the various imperialist countries has become acute, and is growing more acute every day. The revolutionary movement among the hundreds of millions of oppressed peoples of the East is growing with remarkable vigour. The result of all these conditions is that international imperialism has proved unable to strangle Soviet Russia, although it is far stronger, and has been obliged for the time being to grant her recognition, or semi-recognition, and to conclude trade agreements with her.

The result is a state of equilibrium which, although highly unstable and precarious, enables the Socialist Republic to exist—not for long, of course—within the capitalist encirclement.

## 2. THE INTERNATIONAL ALIGNMENT OF CLASS FORCES

This state of affairs has given rise to the following international alignment of class forces.

The international bourgeoisie, deprived of the opportunity of waging open war against Soviet Russia, is waiting and watching for the moment when circumstances will permit it to resume the war.

The proletariat in all the advanced capitalist countries has already formed its vanguard, the Communist Parties, which are growing, making steady progress towards winning the majority of the proletariat in each country, and destroying the influence of the old trade union bureaucrats and of the upper stratum of the working class of America and Europe, which has been corrupted by imperialist privileges.

The petty-bourgeois democrats in the capitalist countries, whose foremost sections are represented by the Second and Two-and-a-Half Internationals, serve today as the mainstay of capitalism, since they retain an influence over the majority, or a considerable section, of the industrial and commercial workers and office employees who are afraid that if revolution breaks out they will lose the relative petty-bourgeois prosperity created by the privileges of imperialism. But the growing economic crisis is worsening the condition of broad sections of the people everywhere, and this, with the looming inevitability of new imperialist wars if capitalism is preserved, is steadily weakening this mainstay.

The masses of the working people in the colonial and semi-colonial countries, who constitute the overwhelming majority of the population of the globe, were roused to political life at the turn of the twentieth century, particularly by the revolutions in Russia, Turkey, Persia and China. The imperialist war of 1914-18 and the Soviet power in Russia are completing the process of converting these masses into an active factor in world politics and in the revolutionary destruction of imperialism, although the educated philistines of Europe and America, including the leaders of the Second and Two-and-a-Half Internationals, stubbornly refuse to see this. British India is at the head of these countries, and there revolution is maturing in proportion, on the one hand, to the growth of the industrial and railway proletariat, and, on the other, to the increase in the brutal terrorism of the British, who with ever greater frequency resort to massacres (Amritsar),<sup>232</sup> public floggings, etc.

### 3. THE ALIGNMENT OF CLASS FORCES IN RUSSIA

The internal political situation in Soviet Russia is determined by the fact that here, for the first time in history, there have been, for a number of years, only two classes—the proletariat, trained for decades by a very young, but modern, large-scale machine industry, and the small peasantry, who constitute the overwhelming majority of the population.

In Russia, the big landowners and capitalists have not vanished, but they have been subjected to total expropriation and crushed politically as a class, whose remnants are hiding out among Soviet government employees. They have preserved their class organisation abroad, as émigrés, numbering probably from 1,500,000 to 2,000,000 people, with over 50 daily newspapers of all bourgeois and “socialist” (i.e., petty-bourgeois) parties, the remnants of an army, and numerous connections with the international bourgeoisie. These émigrés are striving, with might and main, to destroy the Soviet power and restore capitalism in Russia.

### 4. THE PROLETARIAT AND THE PEASANTRY IN RUSSIA

This being the internal situation in Russia, the main task now confronting her proletariat, as the ruling class, is properly to determine and carry out the measures that are necessary to lead the peasantry, establish a firm alliance with them and achieve the transition, in a series of gradual stages, to large-scale, socialised, mechanised agriculture. This is a particularly difficult task in Russia, both because of her backwardness, and her extreme state of ruin as a result of seven years of imperialist and civil war. But apart from these specific circumstances, this is one of the most difficult tasks of socialist construction that will confront all capitalist countries, with, perhaps, the sole exception of Britain. However, even in regard to Britain it must not be forgotten that, while the small tenant farmers there constitute only a very small class, the percentage of workers and office employees who enjoy a petty-bourgeois standard of living is exceptionally high, due to the actual enslavement of hundreds of millions of people in Britain's colonial possessions.

Hence, from the standpoint of development of the world proletarian revolution as a single process, the epoch Russia is passing through is significant as a practical test and a verification of the policy of a proletariat in power towards the mass of the petty bourgeoisie.

### **5. THE MILITARY ALLIANCE BETWEEN THE PROLETARIAT AND THE PEASANTRY IN THE R.S.F.S.R.**

The basis for proper relations between the proletariat and the peasantry in Soviet Russia was created in the period of 1917-21 when the invasion of the capitalists and landowners, supported by the whole world bourgeoisie and all the petty-bourgeois democratic parties (Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks), caused the proletariat and the peasantry to form, sign and seal a military alliance to defend the Soviet power. Civil war is the most intense form of class struggle, but the more intense it is, the more rapidly its flames consume all petty-bourgeois illusions and prejudices, and the more clearly experience proves even to the most backward strata of the peasantry that only the dictatorship of the proletariat can save it, and that the Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks are in fact merely the servants of the landowners and capitalists.

But while the military alliance between the proletariat and the peasantry was—and had perforce to be—the primary form of their firm alliance, it could not have been maintained even for a few weeks without an economic alliance between the two classes. The peasants received from the workers' state all the land and were given protection against the landowners and the kulaks; the workers have been receiving from the peasants loans of food supplies until large-scale industry is restored.

### **6. THE TRANSITION TO PROPER ECONOMIC RELATIONS BETWEEN THE PROLETARIAT AND THE PEASANTRY**

The alliance between the small peasants and the proletariat can become a correct and stable one from the socialist standpoint only when the complete restoration of transport and large-scale industry enables the proletariat to give the peasants, in exchange for food, all the goods they need for their own use and for the improvement of their farms. With the country in ruins, this could not possibly be achieved at once. The surplus appropriation system was the best measure available to the insufficiently organised state to maintain itself in the incredibly arduous war against the landowners. The crop failure and the fodder shortage in 1920 particularly increased the hardships of the peasantry, already severe enough, and made the immediate transition to the tax in kind imperative.

The moderate tax in kind will bring about a big improvement in the condition of the peasantry at once, and will at the same

time stimulate them to enlarge crop areas and improve farming methods.

The tax in kind signifies a transition from the requisition of all the peasants' surplus grain to regular socialist exchange of products between industry and agriculture.

#### 7. THE CONDITIONS UNDER WHICH THE SOVIET GOVERNMENT CAN PERMIT CAPITALISM AND CONCESSIONS, AND THE SIGNIFICANCE THEREOF

Naturally, the tax in kind means freedom for the peasant to dispose of his after-tax surplus at his own discretion. Since the state cannot provide the peasant with goods from socialist factories in exchange for all his surplus, freedom to trade with this surplus necessarily means freedom for the development of capitalism.

Within the limits indicated, however, this is not at all dangerous for socialism as long as transport and large-scale industry remain in the hands of the proletariat. On the contrary, the development of capitalism, controlled and regulated by the proletarian state (i.e., "state" capitalism in *this* sense of the term), is advantageous and necessary in an extremely devastated and backward small-peasant country (within certain limits, of course), inasmuch as it is capable of hastening the *immediate* revival of peasant farming. This applies still more to concessions: without denationalising anything, the workers' state leases certain mines, forest tracts, oilfields, and so forth, to foreign capitalists in order to obtain from them extra equipment and machinery that will enable us to accelerate the restoration of Soviet large-scale industry.

The payment made to the concessionaires in the form of a share of the highly valuable products obtained is undoubtedly tribute, which the workers' state pays to the world bourgeoisie; without in any way glossing this over, we must clearly realise that we stand to gain by paying this tribute, so long as it accelerates the restoration of our large-scale industry and substantially improves the condition of the workers and peasants.

#### 8. THE SUCCESS OF OUR FOOD POLICY

The food policy pursued by Soviet Russia in 1917-21 was undoubtedly very crude and imperfect, and gave rise to many abuses. A number of mistakes were made in its implementation. But as a whole, it was the only possible policy under the conditions



prevailing at the time. And it did fulfil its historic mission: it saved the proletarian dictatorship in a ruined and backward country. There can be no doubt that it has gradually improved. In the first year that we had full power (August 1, 1918 to August 1, 1919) the state collected 110 million poods of grain; in the second year it collected 220 million poods, and in the third year—over 285 million poods.

Now, having acquired practical experience, we have set out, and expect, to collect 400 million poods (the tax in kind is expected to bring in 240 million poods). Only when it is actually in possession of an adequate stock of food will the workers' state be able to stand firmly on its own feet economically, secure the steady, if slow, restoration of large-scale industry, and create a proper financial system.

#### **9. THE MATERIAL BASIS OF SOCIALISM AND THE PLAN FOR THE ELECTRIFICATION OF RUSSIA**

A large-scale machine industry capable of reorganising agriculture is the only material basis that is possible for socialism. But we cannot confine ourselves to this general thesis. It must be made more concrete. Large-scale industry based on the latest achievements of technology and capable of reorganising agriculture implies the electrification of the whole country. We had to undertake the scientific work of drawing up such a plan for the electrification of the R.S.F.S.R. and we have accomplished it. With the co-operation of over two hundred of the best scientists, engineers and agronomists in Russia, this work has now been completed; it was published in a large volume and, as a whole, endorsed by the Eighth All-Russia Congress of Soviets in December 1920. Arrangements have now been made to convene an all-Russia congress of electrical engineers in August 1921 to examine this plan in detail, before it is given final government endorsement.<sup>233</sup> The execution of the first part of the electrification scheme is estimated to take ten years, and will require about 370 million man-days.

In 1918, we had eight newly erected power stations (with a total capacity of 4,757 kw); in 1919, the figure rose to 36 (total capacity of 1,648 kw), and in 1920, it rose to 100 (total capacity of 8,699 kw).

Modest as this beginning is for our vast country, a start has been made, work has begun and is making steady progress. After the imperialist war, after a million prisoners of war in Germany had become familiar with modern up-to-date technique, after the stern but hardening experience of three years of civil war, the

Russian peasant is a different man. With every passing month he sees more clearly and more vividly that only the guidance given by the proletariat is capable of leading the mass of small farmers out of capitalist slavery to socialism.

**10. THE ROLE OF "PURE DEMOCRACY", THE SECOND  
AND TWO-AND-A-HALF INTERNATIONALS,  
THE SOCIALIST-REVOLUTIONARIES AND THE MENSHEVIKS  
AS THE ALLIES OF CAPITAL**

The dictatorship of the proletariat does not signify a cessation of the class struggle, but its continuation in a new form and with new weapons. This dictatorship is essential as long as classes exist, as long as the bourgeoisie, overthrown in one country, intensifies tenfold its attacks on socialism on an international scale. In the transition period, the small farmer class is bound to experience certain vacillations. The difficulties of transition, and the influence of the bourgeoisie, inevitably cause the mood of this mass to change from time to time. Upon the proletariat, enfeebled and to a certain extent declassed by the destruction of the large-scale machine industry, which is its vital foundation, devolves the very difficult but paramount historic task of holding out in spite of these vacillations, and of carrying to victory its cause of emancipating labour from the yoke of capital.

The policy pursued by the petty-bourgeois democratic parties, i.e., the parties affiliated to the Second and Two-and-a-Half Internationals, represented in Russia by the S R (Socialist-Revolutionary) and Menshevik parties, is the political expression of the vacillations of the petty bourgeoisie. These parties now have their headquarters and newspapers abroad, and are actually in a bloc with the whole of the bourgeois counter-revolution and are serving it loyally.

The shrewd leaders of the Russian big bourgeoisie headed by Milyukov, the leader of the Cadé (Constitutional-Democratic) Party, have quite clearly, definitely and openly appraised this role of the petty-bourgeois democrats, i.e., the Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks. In connection with the Kronstadt mutiny, in which the Mensheviks, Socialist-Revolutionaries and whiteguards joined forces, Milyukov declared in favour of the "Soviets without the Bolsheviks" slogan. Elaborating on the idea, he wrote that the Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks "are welcome to try" (*Pravda* No. 64, 1921, quoted from the Paris *Posledniye Novosti*<sup>234</sup>), because upon them devolves the task of first taking power away from the Bolsheviks. Milyukov, the leader of the big bourgeoisie, has correctly appraised the lesson taught by all revolutions, namely, that the petty-bourgeois democrats

are incapable of holding power, and always serve merely as a screen for the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie, and a stepping stone to its undivided power.

The proletarian revolution in Russia again and again confirms this lesson of 1789-94 and 1848-49, and also what Frederick Engels said in his letter to Bebel of December 11, 1884.

"Pure democracy ... when the moment of revolution comes, acquires a temporary importance ... as the final sheet-anchor of the whole bourgeois and even feudal economy.... Thus between March and September 1848 the whole feudal-bureaucratic mass strengthened the liberals in order to hold down the revolutionary masses.... In any case our sole adversary on the day of the crisis and on the day after the crisis will be the whole of the reaction which will group around pure democracy, and this, I think, should not be lost sight of." (Published in Russian in *Kommunistichesky Trud*<sup>235</sup> No. 360, June 9, 1921, in an article by Comrade V. Adoratsky: "Marx and Engels on Democracy". In German, published in the book, Friedrich Engels, *Politisches Vermächtnis*, Internationale Jugend-Bibliothek, Nr. 12, Berlin, 1920, S. 19.)<sup>236</sup>

N. Lenin

Moscow, Kremlin, June 13, 1921

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## 2

### REMARKS ON THE DRAFT THESES ON TACTICS FOR THE THIRD CONGRESS OF THE COMMUNIST INTERNATIONAL

LETTER TO G. Y. ZINOVIEV<sup>237</sup>

The crux of the matter is that Levi in very many respects is *right politically*. Unfortunately, he is guilty of a number of breaches of discipline for which the Party has expelled him.

Thalheimer's and Béla Kun's theses are politically utterly fallacious. Mere phrases and playing at Leftism.

Radek is vacillating and has spoilt his original draft by a number of concessions to "Leftist" silliness. His first "concession" is highly characteristic: in § 1 of his theses "*Umgrenzung der Fragen*" he first had "winning the majority of the working class (to the principles of communism)" (mark this). Amended (verball-

horn) to: "winning the socially decisive sections of the working class".

A gem! To weaken here, in such a context, the necessity of winning precisely the *majority* of the working class "to the principles of communism", is the height of absurdity.

To win power, you need, *under certain conditions* (even when the *majority* of the working class have already been won over to the *principles of communism*) a blow dealt at the decisive place by the majority of the socially decisive sections of the working class.

To modify, verballhornen, this truth in such a way that § 1 of the general tasks of the Communist International about winning the working class *to the principles of communism weakens* the idea about the necessity of winning the *majority* of the working class, is a classic example of Béla Kun's and Thalheimer's ineptitude (it looks all right, dammit, but it's all damn'd wrong) and of Radek's ... *hasty complaisance*.

Radek's theses were much too long and boneless, and lacked a political central point. And Radek diluted them *still* more, spoil them hopelessly.

What's to be done? I don't know. So much time and effort wasted.

If you don't want an open fight at the congress, then I propose:

1) that Thalheimer's and B. Kun's theses be rejected by exact voting this very day (since Bukharin assures me that the basic points have to be settled not later than today: they were better postponed) as being basically erroneous. Have this recorded. You will spoil everything if you don't do this and show indulgence.

2) that Radek's first draft, "unimproved" by any corrections, one specimen of which I have quoted, should be adopted as a basis.

3) that 1-3 persons be entrusted with cutting down the text and improving it so that it is no longer boneless (if that is possible!) and clearly, precisely and unequivocally puts into focus as the central ideas the following:

None of the Communist Parties anywhere have yet won the majority (of the working class), not only as regards organisational leadership, but to the principles of communism as well. This is the basis of everything. To "weaken" this foundation of the only reasonable tactic is *criminal irresponsibility*.

Hence: revolutionary explosions are possible nevertheless very soon considering the abundance of inflammable material in Europe; an easy victory of the working class—in exceptionable cases—is also possible. But it would be absurd now to base the tactics of the Communist International on this possibility; it is absurd and harmful to write and think that the propaganda period has ended and the period of action has started.

The tactics of the Communist International should be based on a steady and systematic drive to win the *majority of the working class*, first and foremost *within the old trade unions*. Then we shall win for certain, whatever the course of events. As for "winning" for a short time in an exceptionally happy turn of events—any fool can do that.

Hence: the tactic of the Open Letter<sup>238</sup> should definitely be applied everywhere. This should be said straight out, clearly and exactly, because waverings in regard to the "Open Letter" are extremely harmful, extremely shameful and **extremely widespread**. We may as well admit this. All those who have failed to grasp the necessity of the Open Letter tactic should be *expelled* from the Communist International within a month after its Third Congress. I clearly see my mistake in voting for the admission of KAPD.<sup>239</sup> It will have to be rectified as quickly and fully as possible.

Instead of spinning a long yarn like Radek, we had better have the whole text of the Open Letter translated (and in German quoted in full), its significance properly brought home and adopted as a model.

I would confine the *general* resolution on tactics to this.

Only then will the *tone* be set. The central idea will be clear. There will be no woolliness. No possibility of everyone reading his own meaning into it (like in Radek's).

Radek's original draft would then be cut down to a quarter, at least.

It is time we stopped writing and voting *brochures* instead of theses. Under this system partial mistakes are inevitable with any of us, even when the matter is indisputable. And when we have something boneless and disputable we are bound to make *big* mistakes and spoil the whole thing.

And then, if you have the itch for it, you can add a supplement: on the basis of such a tactic, specifically by way of example, precisely as an example and not as a principle, we add so-and-so and so-and-so.

Further.

To generalise Serrati and Levi into the same "opportunism" is stupid. Serrati is guilty; of what? It should be said clearly and precisely—on the *Italian* question, and not on the question of general tactics. Of having split with the Communists and not having expelled the reformists, Turati & Co. Until you have carried this out, Italian comrades, you are *outside* the Communist International. We are expelling you.<sup>240</sup>

And to the Italian Communists—serious advice and the *demand*: so long as you have not been able by persistence, patience and skill to **convince** and win over the majority of the Serratian *work-*

ers, don't swagger, don't play at Leftism. "Fall Levi"\* is not in general tactics, but in the appraisal of Märzaktion,\*\* on the German question.<sup>241</sup> Brandler says: there was a defensive. The government provoked it.

Assuming this is true, that it is a fact.

What deduction is to be drawn from this?

1) That all the shouting about an offensive—and there was any amount of it—was erroneous and absurd;

2) that it was a tactical *error* to call for a *general* strike once there was provocation on the part of the government, who *wanted* to draw the *small fortress* of communism into the struggle (the district in the centre where the Communists already had a majority).

3) Mistakes like this must be avoided in future, as the situation in *Germany* is a special one after the killing of 20,000 workers in the civil war through the skilful manoeuvres of the Right.

4) To call the defensive of hundreds of thousands of workers (Brandler says *a million*. Isn't he mistaken? Isn't he *exaggerating*? Why are there no figures by regions and cities???) a "putsch", and a "Bakunist putsch" at that, is worse than a mistake, it is a breach of revolutionary discipline. Since Levi added to this a number of other breaches (list them very carefully and exactly) he deserves his punishment and has earned his expulsion.

The *term* of expulsion should be fixed, say, at six months at least. He should then be *permitted* to seek readmission to the Party, and the Communist International advises that he be readmitted *provided* he has acted loyally during that time.

I have not yet read anything, apart from Brandler's pamphlet, and am writing this on the basis of Levi's and Brandler's pamphlets. Brandler has proved one thing—if he has proved anything—that the Märzaktion was not a "Bakunist putsch" [for such *abusive language* Levi ought to be expelled] but a heroic defence by revolutionary workers, hundreds of thousands of them; but however heroic it was, *in future* such a challenge, provoked by the government, which, since 1. 1919, has already killed by provocations 20,000 workers *should not* be accepted until the Communists have the majority behind them all over the country, and not just in one small district.

(The July days of 1917 were not a Bakunist putsch. For such an appraisal we would have expelled a person from the Party. The July days were an heroic *offensive*. And the deduction we drew was that we would not launch the next heroic offensive *prematurely*. Premature acceptance of a general battle—that is

\* The Levi case —Ed.

\*\* The March action —Ed.

what the Märsaktion really was. Not a putsch, but a *mistake*, mitigated by the heroism of a defensive by hundreds of thousands.)

Concerning Šmeral. Can't we have at least 2 or 3 *documents*?

There would be no harm in having at least 2 documents (2-4 pages each) on each country printed for the Comintern.

What are the facts about Šmeral? about Strasser?

Do not forget one of the chief things—to delete from Radek's first theses everything relating to the "waiting party", to its censure. It must all come out.<sup>242</sup>

Regarding Bulgaria, Serbia (Yugoslavia?) and Czechoslovakia, the question of *these* countries must be put concretely, specially, clearly, and precisely.

If opinion is divided on this, I suggest convening the Politbureau.

10/VI.1921 *Lenin*

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### 3

## SPEECH IN DEFENCE OF THE TACTICS OF THE COMMUNIST INTERNATIONAL JULY 1

Comrades! I deeply regret that I must confine myself to self-defence. (*Laughter.*) I say deeply regret, because after acquainting myself with Comrade Terracini's speech and the amendments introduced by three delegations, I should very much like to take the offensive, for, properly speaking, offensive operations are essential<sup>243</sup> against the views defended by Terracini and these three delegations. If the Congress is not going to wage a vigorous offensive against such errors, against such "Leftist" stupidities, the whole movement is doomed. That is my deep conviction. But we are organised and disciplined Marxists. We cannot be satisfied with speeches against individual comrades. We Russians are already sick and tired of these Leftist phrases. We are men of organisation. In drawing up our plans, we must proceed in an organised way and try to find the correct line. It is, of course, no secret that our theses are a compromise. And why not? Among Communists, who have already convened their Third Congress and have worked out definite fundamental principles, compromises under certain conditions are necessary. Our theses, put forward by the Russian delegation, were studied and prepared in

the most careful way and were the result of long arguments and meetings with various delegations. They aim at establishing the basic line of the Communist International and are especially necessary now after we have not only formally condemned the real Centrists but have expelled them from the Party. Such are the facts. I have to stand up for these theses. Now, when Terracini comes forward and says that we must continue the fight against the Centrists, and goes on to tell how it is intended to wage the fight, I say that if these amendments denote a definite trend, a relentless fight against this trend is essential, for otherwise there is no communism and no Communist International. I am surprised that the German Communist Workers' Party has not put its signature to these amendments. (*Laughter.*) Indeed, just listen to what Terracini is defending and what his amendments say. They begin in this way: "On page 1, column 1, line 19, the word 'majority' should be deleted." Majority! That is extremely dangerous! (*Laughter.*) Then further: instead of the words "'basic propositions', insert 'aims'". Basic propositions and aims are two different things; even the anarchists will agree with us about aims, because they too stand for the abolition of exploitation and class distinctions.

I have met and talked with few anarchists in my life, but all the same I have seen enough of them. I sometimes succeeded in reaching agreement with them about aims, but never as regards principles. Principles are not an aim, a programme, a tactic or a theory. Tactics and theory are not principles. How do we differ from the anarchists on principles? The principles of communism consist in the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat and in the use of state coercion in the transition period. Such are the principles of communism, but they are not its aim. And the comrades who have tabled this proposal have made a mistake.

Secondly, it is stated there: "the word 'majority' should be deleted." Read the whole passage:

"The Third Congress of the Communist International is setting out to review questions of tactics under conditions when in a whole number of countries the objective situation has become aggravated in a revolutionary sense, and when a whole number of communist mass parties have been organised, which, incidentally, in their actual revolutionary struggle have nowhere taken into their hands the virtual leadership of the majority of the working class."

And so, they want the word "majority" deleted. If we cannot agree on such simple things, then I do not understand how we can work together and lead the proletariat to victory. Then it is not at all surprising that we cannot reach agreement on the question of principles either. Show me a party which has already won the majority of the working class. Terracini did not even think of adducing any example. Indeed, there is no such example.



And so, the word "aims" is to be put instead of "principles", and the word "majority" is to be deleted. No, thank you! We shall not do it. Even the German party—one of the best—does not have the majority of the working class behind it. That is a fact. We, who face a most severe struggle, are not afraid to utter this truth, but here you have three delegations who wish to begin with an untruth, for if the Congress deletes the word "majority" it will show that it wants an untruth. That is quite clear.

Then comes the following amendment: "On page 4, column 1, line 10, the words 'Open Letter', etc., should be deleted." I have already heard one speech today in which I found the same idea. But there it was quite natural. It was the speech of Comrade Hempel, a member of the German Communist Workers' Party. He said: "The 'Open Letter' was an act of opportunism." To my deep regret and shame, I have already heard such views privately. But when, at the Congress, after such prolonged debate, the "Open Letter" is declared opportunist—that is a shame and a disgrace! And now Comrade Terracini comes forward on behalf of the three delegations and wants to delete the words "Open Letter". What is the good then of the fight against the German Communist Workers' Party? The "Open Letter" is a model political step. This is stated in our theses and we must certainly stand by it. It is a model because it is the first act of a practical method of winning over the majority of the working class. In Europe, where almost all the proletarians are organised, we must win the majority of the working class and anyone who fails to understand this is lost to the communist movement; he will never learn anything if he has failed to learn that much during the three years of the great revolution.

Terracini says that we were victorious in Russia although the Party was very small. He is dissatisfied with what is said in the theses about Czechoslovakia. Here there are 27 amendments, and if I had a mind to criticise them I should, like some orators, have to speak for not less than three hours. . . . We have heard here that in Czechoslovakia the Communist Party has 300,000-400,000 members, and that it is essential to win over the majority, to create an invincible force and continue enlisting fresh masses of workers. Terracini is already prepared to attack. He says: if there are already 400,000 workers in the party, why should we want more? Delete! (*Laughter.*) He is afraid of the word "masses" and wants to eradicate it. Comrade Terracini has understood very little of the Russian revolution. In Russia, we were a small party, but we had with us in addition the majority of the Soviets of Workers' and Peasants' Deputies throughout the country. (*Cries: "Quite true!"*) Do you have anything of the sort? We had with us almost half the army, which then numbered at least ten million

men. Do you really have the majority of the army behind you? Show me such a country! If these views of Comrade Terracini are shared by three other delegations, then something is wrong in the International! Then we must say: "Stop! There must be a decisive fight! Otherwise the Communist International is lost." (*Animation.*)

On the basis of my experience I must say, although I am taking up a defensive position (*laughter*), that the aim and the principle of my speech consist in defence of the resolution and the es proposed by our delegation. It would, of course, be pedantic to say that not a letter there must be altered. I have had to read many resolutions and I am well aware that very good amendments could be introduced in every line of them. But that would be pedantry. If, nevertheless, I declare now that in a political sense not a single letter can be altered, it is because the amendments, as I see them, are of a quite definite political nature and because they lead us along a path that is harmful and dangerous to the Communist International. Therefore, I and all of us and the Russian delegation must insist that not a single letter in the theses is altered. We have not only condemned our Right-wing elements—we have expelled them. But if, like Terracini, people turn the fight against the Rightists into a sport, then we must say: "Stop! Otherwise the danger will become too grave!"

Terracini has defended the theory of an offensive struggle.<sup>244</sup> In this connection the notorious amendments propose a formula two or three pages long. There is no need for us to read them. We know what they say. Terracini has stated the issue quite clearly. He has defended the theory of an offensive, pointing out "dynamic tendencies" and the "transition from passivity to activity". We in Russia have already had adequate political experience in the struggle against the Centrists. As long as fifteen years ago, we were waging a struggle against our opportunists and Centrists, and also against the Mensheviks, and we were victorious not only over the Mensheviks, but also over the semi-anarchists.

If we had not done this, we would not have been able to retain power in our hands for three and a half years, or even for three and a half weeks, and we would not have been able to convene communist congresses here. "Dynamic tendencies", "transition from passivity to activity"—these are all phrases the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries had used against us. Now they are in prison, defending there the "aims of communism" and thinking of the "transition from passivity to activity". (*Laughter.*) The line of reasoning followed in the proposed amendments is an impossible one, because they contain no Marxism, no political experience, and no reasoning. Have we in our theses elaborated a general theory of the revolutionary offensive? Has Radek or anyone of us

committed such a stupidity? We have spoken of the theory of an offensive in relation to a quite definite country and at a quite definite period.

From our struggle against the Mensheviks we can quote instances showing that even before the first revolution there were some who doubted whether the revolutionary party ought to conduct an offensive. If such doubts assailed any Social-Democrat—as we all called ourselves at that time—we took up the struggle against him and said that he was an opportunist, that he did not understand anything of Marxism and the dialectics of the revolutionary party. Is it really possible for a party to dispute whether a revolutionary offensive is permissible in general? To find such examples in this country one would have to go back some fifteen years. If there are Centrists or disguised Centrists who dispute the theory of the offensive, they should be immediately expelled. That question cannot give rise to disputes. But the fact that even now, after three years of the Communist International, we are arguing about “dynamic tendencies”, about the “transition from passivity to activity”—that is a shame and a disgrace.

We do not have any dispute about this with Comrade Radek, who drafted these theses jointly with us. Perhaps it was not quite correct to begin talking in Germany *about the theory* of the revolutionary offensive when an actual offensive had not been prepared. Nevertheless the March action was a great step forward in spite of the mistakes of its leaders. But this does not matter. Hundreds of thousands of workers fought heroically. However courageously the German Communist Workers' Party fought against the bourgeoisie, we must repeat what Comrade Radek said in a Russian article about Hölz. If anyone, even an anarchist, fights heroically against the bourgeoisie, that is, of course, a great thing; but it is a real step forward if hundreds of thousands fight against the vile provocation of the social-traitors and against the bourgeoisie.

It is very important to be critical of one's mistakes. We began with that. If anyone, after a struggle in which hundreds of thousands have taken part, comes out against this struggle and behaves like Levi, then he should be expelled. And that is what was done. But we must draw a lesson from this. Had we really prepared for an offensive? (*Radek*: “We had not even prepared for defence.”) Indeed only newspaper articles talked of an offensive. This theory as applied to the March action in Germany in 1921 was incorrect—we have to admit that—but, in general, the theory of the revolutionary offensive is not at all false.

We were victorious in Russia, and with such ease, because we prepared for our revolution during the imperialist war. That was the first condition. Ten million workers and peasants in Russia

were armed, and our slogan was: an immediate peace at all costs. We were victorious because the vast mass of the peasants were revolutionarily disposed against the big landowners. The Socialist-Revolutionaries, the adherents of the Second and the Two-and-a-Half Internationals, were a big peasant party in November 1917. They demanded revolutionary methods but, like true heroes of the Second and the Two-and-a-Half Internationals, lacked the courage to act in a revolutionary way. In August and September 1917 we said: "Theoretically we are fighting the Socialist-Revolutionaries as we did before, but practically we are ready to accept their programme because only we are able to put it into effect." We did just what we said. The peasantry, ill-disposed towards us in November 1917, after our victory, who sent a majority of Socialist-Revolutionaries into the Constituent Assembly, were won over by us, if not in the course of a few days—as I mistakenly expected and predicted—at any rate in the course of a few weeks. The difference was not great. Can you point out any country in Europe where you could win over the majority of the peasantry in the course of a few weeks? Italy perhaps? (*Laughter.*) If it is said that we were victorious in Russia in spite of not having a big party, that only proves that those who say it have not understood the Russian revolution and that they have absolutely no understanding of how to prepare for a revolution.

Our first step was to create a real Communist Party so as to know whom we were talking to and whom we could fully trust. The slogan of the First and Second congresses was "Down with the Centrists!" We cannot hope to master even the ABC of communism, unless all along the line and throughout the world we make short shrift of the Centrists and semi-Centrists, whom in Russia we call Mensheviks. Our first task is to create a genuinely revolutionary party and to break with the Mensheviks. But that is only a preparatory school. We are already convening the Third Congress, and Comrade Terracini keeps saying that the task of the preparatory school consists in hunting out, pursuing and exposing Centrists and semi-Centrists. No, thank you! We have already done this long enough. At the Second Congress we said that the Centrists are our enemies. But, we must go forward really. The second stage, after organising into a party, consists in learning to prepare for revolution. In many countries we have not even learned how to assume the leadership. We were victorious in Russia not only because the undisputed majority of the working class was on our side (during the elections in 1917 the overwhelming majority of the workers were with us against the Mensheviks), but also because half the army, immediately after our seizure of power, and nine-tenths of the peasants, in the course of some weeks, came over to our side; we were victorious because

we adopted the agrarian programme of the Socialist-Revolutionaries instead of our own, and put it into effect. Our victory lay in the fact that we carried out the Socialist-Revolutionary programme; that is why this victory was so easy. Is it possible that you in the West can have such illusions? It is ridiculous! Just compare the concrete economic conditions, Comrade Terracini and all of you who have signed the proposed amendments! In spite of the fact that the majority so rapidly came to be on our side, the difficulties confronting us after our victory were very great. Nevertheless we won through because we kept in mind not only our aims but also our principles, and did not tolerate in our Party those who kept silent about principles but talked of aims, "dynamic tendencies" and the "transition from passivity to activity". Perhaps we shall be blamed for preferring to keep such gentlemen in prison. But dictatorship is impossible in any other way. We must prepare for dictatorship, and this consists in combating such phrases and such amendments. (*Laughter.*) Throughout, our theses speak of the masses. But, comrades, we need to understand what is meant by masses. The German Communist Workers' Party, the Left-wing comrades, misuse this word. But Comrade Terracini, too, and all those who have signed these amendments, do not know how the word "masses" should be read.

I have been speaking too long as it is; hence I wish to say only a few words about the concept of "masses". It is one that changes in accordance with the changes in the nature of the struggle. At the beginning of the struggle it took only a few thousand genuinely revolutionary workers to warrant talk of the masses. If the party succeeds in drawing into the struggle not only its own members, if it also succeeds in arousing non-party people, it is well on the way to winning the masses. During our revolutions there were instances when several thousand workers represented the masses. In the history of our movement, and of our struggle against the Mensheviks, you will find many examples where several thousand workers in a town were enough to give a clearly mass character to the movement. You have a mass when several thousand non-party workers, who usually live a philistine life and drag out a miserable existence, and who have never heard anything about politics, begin to act in a revolutionary way. If the movement spreads and intensifies, it gradually develops into a real revolution. We saw this in 1905 and 1917 during three revolutions, and you too will have to go through all this. When the revolution has been sufficiently prepared, the concept "masses" becomes different: several thousand workers no longer constitute the masses. This word begins to denote something else. The concept of "masses" undergoes a change so that it implies the major-

ity, and not simply a majority of the workers alone, but the majority of all the exploited. Any other kind of interpretation is impermissible for a revolutionary, and any other sense of the word becomes incomprehensible. It is possible that even a small party, the British or American party, for example, after it has thoroughly studied the course of political development and become acquainted with the life and customs of the non-party masses, will at a favourable moment evoke a revolutionary movement (Comrade Radek has pointed to the miners' strike<sup>245</sup> as a good example). You will have a mass movement if such a party comes forward with its slogans at such a moment and succeeds in getting millions of workers to follow it. I would not altogether deny that a revolution can be started by a very small party and brought to a victorious conclusion. But one must have a knowledge of the methods by which the masses can be won over. For this thoroughgoing preparation of revolution is essential. But here you have comrades coming forward with the assertion that we should immediately give up the demand for "big" masses. They must be challenged. Without thoroughgoing preparation, you will not achieve victory in any country. Quite a small party is sufficient to lead the masses. At certain times there is no necessity for big organisations.

But to win, we must have the sympathy of the masses. An absolute majority is not always essential; but what is essential to win and retain power is not only the majority of the working class—I use the term "working class" in its West-European sense, i.e., in the sense of the industrial proletariat—but also the majority of the working and exploited rural population. Have you thought about this? Do we find in Terracini's speech even a hint at this thought? He speaks only of "dynamic tendency" and the "transition from passivity to activity". Does he devote even a single word to the food question? And yet the workers demand their victuals, although they can put up with a great deal and go hungry, as we have seen to a certain extent in Russia. We must, therefore, win over to our side not only the majority of the working class, but also the majority of the working and exploited rural population. Have you prepared for this? Almost nowhere.

And so, I repeat: I must unreservedly defend our theses and I feel I am bound to do it. We not only condemned the Centrists but expelled them from the Party. Now we must deal with another aspect, which we also consider dangerous. We must tell the comrades the truth in the most polite form (and in our theses it is told in a kind and considerate way) so that no one feels insulted: we are confronted now by other, more important questions than that of attacks on the Centrists. We have had enough of this ques-

tion. It has already become somewhat boring. Instead, the comrades ought to learn to wage a real revolutionary struggle. The German workers have already begun this. Hundreds of thousands of proletarians in that country have been fighting heroically. Anyone who opposes this struggle should be immediately expelled. But after that we must not engage in empty word-spinning but must immediately begin to learn, on the basis of the mistakes made, how to organise the struggle better. We must not conceal our mistakes from the enemy. Anyone who is afraid of this is no revolutionary. On the contrary, if we openly declare to the workers: "Yes, we have made mistakes," it will mean that they will not be repeated and we shall be able better to choose the moment. And if during the struggle itself the majority of the working people prove to be on our side—not only the majority of the workers, but the majority of all the exploited and oppressed—then we shall really be victorious. (*Prolonged, stormy applause.*)

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## FOURTH ANNIVERSARY OF THE OCTOBER REVOLUTION

The fourth anniversary of October 25 (November 7) is approaching.

The farther that great day recedes from us, the more clearly we see the significance of the proletarian revolution in Russia, and the more deeply we reflect upon the practical experience of our work as a whole.

Very briefly and, of course, in very incomplete and rough outline, this significance and experience may be summed up as follows.

The direct and immediate object of the revolution in Russia was a bourgeois-democratic one, namely, to destroy the survivals of medievalism and sweep them away completely, to purge Russia of this barbarism, of this shame, and to remove this immense obstacle to all culture and progress in our country.

And we can justifiably pride ourselves on having carried out that purge with greater determination and much more rapidly, boldly and successfully, and, from the point of view of its effect on the masses, much more widely and deeply, than the great French Revolution over one hundred and twenty-five years ago.

Both the anarchists and the petty-bourgeois democrats (i.e., the Mensheviks and the Socialist-Revolutionaries, who are the Russian counterparts of that international social type) have talked and are still talking an incredible lot of nonsense about the relation between the bourgeois-democratic revolution and the socialist (*that is*, proletarian) revolution. The last four years have proved to the hilt that our interpretation of Marxism on this point, and our estimate of the experience of former revolutions were correct. We have *consummated* the bourgeois-democratic revolution as nobody had done before. We are *advancing* towards the socialist revolution consciously, firmly and unswervingly, knowing that it is not separated from the bourgeois-dem-



ocratic revolution by a Chinese Wall, and knowing too that (in the last analysis) *struggle alone* will determine how far we shall advance, what part of this immense and lofty task we shall accomplish, and to what extent we shall succeed in consolidating our victories. Time will show. But we see even now that a tremendous amount—tremendous for this ruined, exhausted and backward country—has already been done towards the socialist transformation of society.

Let us, however, finish what we have to say about the bourgeois-democratic content of our revolution. Marxists must understand what that means. To explain, let us take a few striking examples.

The bourgeois-democratic content of the revolution means that the social relations (system, institutions) of the country are purged of medievalism, serfdom, feudalism.

What were the chief manifestations, survivals, remnants of serfdom in Russia up to 1917? The monarchy, the system of social estates, landed proprietorship and land tenure, the status of women, religion, and national oppression. Take any one of these Augean stables, which, incidentally, were left largely uncleansed by all the more advanced states when they accomplished *their* bourgeois-democratic revolutions one hundred and twenty-five, two hundred and fifty and more years ago (1649 in England); take any of these Augean stables,<sup>246</sup> and you will see that we have cleansed them thoroughly. In a matter of *ten weeks*, from October 25 (November 7), 1917 to January 5, 1918, when the Constituent Assembly<sup>247</sup> was dissolved, we accomplished a thousand times more in this respect than was accomplished by the bourgeois democrats and liberals (the Cadets) and by the petty-bourgeois democrats (the Mensheviks and the Socialist-Revolutionaries) *during the eight months* they were in power.

Those poltroons, gas-bags, vainglorious Narcissuses and petty Hamlets brandished their wooden swords—but did not even destroy the monarchy! We cleansed out all that monarchist muck as nobody had ever done before. We left not a stone, not a brick of that ancient edifice, the social-estate system (even the most advanced countries, such as Britain, France and Germany, have not completely eliminated the survivals of that system to this day!), standing. We tore out the deep-seated roots of the social-estate system, namely, the remnants of feudalism and serfdom in the system of landownership, to the last. "One may argue" (there are plenty of quill-drivers, Cadets, Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries abroad to indulge in such arguments) as to what "in the long run" will be the outcome of the agrarian reform effected by the Great October Revolution. We have no desire at the moment to waste time on such controversies, for we

are deciding this, as well as the mass of accompanying controversies, by struggle. But the fact cannot be denied that the petty-bourgeois democrats "compromised" with the landowners, the custodians of the traditions of serfdom, for eight months, while we completely swept the landowners and all their traditions from Russian soil in a few weeks.

Take religion, or the denial of rights to women, or the oppression and inequality of the non-Russian nationalities. These are all problems of the bourgeois-democratic revolution. The vulgar petty-bourgeois democrats talked about them for eight months. In not a *single* one of the most advanced countries in the world have *these* questions been *completely* settled on *bourgeois-democratic* lines. In our country they have been settled completely by the legislation of the October Revolution. We have fought and are fighting religion in earnest. We have granted *all* the non-Russian nationalities *their own* republics or autonomous regions. We in Russia no longer have the base, mean and infamous denial of rights to women or inequality of the sexes, that disgusting survival of feudalism and medievalism, which is being renovated by the avaricious bourgeoisie and the dull-witted and frightened petty bourgeoisie in every other country in the world without exception.

All this goes to make up the content of the bourgeois-democratic revolution. A hundred and fifty and two hundred and fifty years ago the progressive leaders of that revolution (or of those revolutions, if we consider each national variety of the one general type) promised to rid mankind of medieval privileges, of sex inequality, of state privileges for one religion or another (or "religious *ideas*", "the church" in general), and of national inequality. They promised, but did not keep their promises. They could not keep them, for they were hindered by their "respect"—for the "sacred right of private property". Our proletarian revolution was not afflicted with this accursed "respect" for this thrice-accursed medievalism and for the "sacred right of private property".

But in order to consolidate the achievements of the bourgeois-democratic revolution for the peoples of Russia, we were obliged to go farther; and we did go farther. We solved the problems of the bourgeois-democratic revolution in passing, as a "by-product" of our main and genuinely *proletarian*-revolutionary, socialist activities. We have always said that reforms are a by-product of the revolutionary class struggle. We said—and proved it by deeds—that bourgeois-democratic reforms are a by-product of the proletarian, i.e., of the socialist revolution. Incidentally, the Kautskys, Hilferdings, Martovs, Chernovs, Hillquits, Longuets, MacDonalds, Turatis and other heroes of "Two-and-a-

Half" Marxism were incapable of understanding *this* relation between the bourgeois-democratic and the proletarian-socialist revolutions. The first develops into the second. The second, in passing, solves the problems of the first. The second consolidates the work of the first. Struggle, and struggle alone, decides how far the second succeeds in outgrowing the first.

The Soviet system is one of the most vivid proofs, or manifestations, of how the one revolution develops into the other. The Soviet system provides the maximum of democracy for the workers and peasants; at the same time, it marks a break with *bourgeois* democracy and the rise of a *new*, epoch-making *type* of democracy, namely, proletarian democracy, or the dictatorship of the proletariat.

Let the curs and swine of the moribund bourgeoisie and of the petty-bourgeois democrats who trail behind them heap imprecations, abuse and derision upon our heads for our reverses and mistakes in the work of building up *our* Soviet system. We do not forget for a moment that we have committed and are committing numerous mistakes and are suffering numerous reverses. How can reverses and mistakes be avoided in a matter so new in the history of the world as the building of an unprecedented *type* of state edifice! We shall work steadfastly to set our reverses and mistakes right and to improve our practical application of Soviet principles, which is still very, very far from being perfect. But we have a right to be and are proud that to us has fallen the good fortune to *begin* the building of a Soviet state, and thereby to *usher in* a new era in world history, the era of the rule of a *new* class, a class which is oppressed in every capitalist country, but which everywhere is marching forward towards a new life, towards victory over the bourgeoisie, towards the dictatorship of the proletariat, towards the emancipation of mankind from the yoke of capital and from imperialist wars.

The question of imperialist wars, of the international policy of finance capital which now dominates the whole world, a policy that must *inevitably* engender new imperialist wars, that must inevitably cause an extreme intensification of national oppression, pillage, brigandry and the strangulation of weak, backward and small nationalities by a handful of "advanced" powers—that question has been the keystone of all policy in all the countries of the globe since 1914. It is a question of life and death for millions upon millions of people. It is a question of whether 20,000,000 people (as compared with the 10,000,000 who were killed in the war of 1914-18 and in the supplementary "minor" wars that are still going on) are to be slaughtered in the next imperialist war, which the bourgeoisie are preparing, and which is growing out of capitalism before our very eyes. It is a question

of whether in that future war, which is inevitable (if capitalism continues to exist), 60,000,000 people are to be maimed (compared with the 30,000,000 maimed in 1914-18). In this question, too, our October Revolution marked the beginning of a new era in world history. The lackeys of the bourgeoisie and its yes-men—the Socialist-Revolutionaries and the Mensheviks, and the petty-bourgeois, allegedly “socialist”, democrats all over the world—derided our slogan “convert the imperialist war into a civil war”. But that slogan proved to be the *truth*—it was the only truth, unpleasant, blunt, naked and brutal but nevertheless the *truth*, as against the host of most refined jingoist and pacifist lies. Those lies are being dispelled. The Brest peace has been exposed. And with every passing day the significance and consequences of a peace that is even worse than the Brest peace—the peace of Versailles—are being more relentlessly exposed. And the millions who are thinking about the causes of the recent war and of the approaching future war are more and more clearly realising the grim and inexorable truth that it is impossible to escape imperialist war, and imperialist peace (if the old orthography were still in use, I would have written the word *mir* in two ways, to give it both its meanings)\* which inevitably engenders imperialist war, that it is impossible to escape that inferno, *except by a Bolshevik struggle and a Bolshevik revolution*.

Let the bourgeoisie and the pacifists, the generals and the petty bourgeoisie, the capitalists and the philistines, the pious Christians and the knights of the Second and the Two-and-a-Half Internationals vent their fury against that revolution. No torrents of abuse, calumnies and lies can enable them to conceal the historic fact that for the first time in hundreds and thousands of years the slaves have replied to a war between slave owners by openly proclaiming the slogan: “Convert this war between slave-owners for the division of their loot into a war of the slaves of all nations against the slave-owners of all nations”.

For the first time in hundreds and thousands of years that slogan has grown from a vague and helpless waiting into a clear and definite political programme, into an effective struggle waged by millions of oppressed people under the leadership of the proletariat; it has grown into the first victory of the proletariat, the first victory in the struggle to abolish war and to unite the workers of all countries against the united bourgeoisie of different nations, against the bourgeoisie that makes peace and war at the expense of the slaves of capital, the wage-workers, the peasants, the working people.

\* In Russian, the word *mir* has two meanings (*world* and *peace*) and had two different spellings in the old orthography—*Ed*.

This first victory is *not yet the final victory*, and it was achieved by our October Revolution at the price of incredible difficulties and hardships, at the price of unprecedented suffering, accompanied by a series of serious reverses and mistakes on our part. How could a single backward people be expected to frustrate the imperialist wars of the most powerful and most developed countries of the world without sustaining reverses and without committing mistakes! We are not afraid to admit our mistakes and shall examine them dispassionately in order to learn how to correct them. But the fact remains that for the first time in hundreds and thousands of years the promise "to reply" to war between the slave-owners by a revolution of the slaves directed *against* all the slave-owners *has been completely fulfilled*—and is being fulfilled despite all difficulties.

We have made the start. When, at what date and time, and the proletarians of which nation will complete this process is not important. The important thing is that the ice has been broken; the road is open, the way has been shown.

Gentlemen, capitalists of all countries, keep up your hypocritical pretence of "defending the fatherland"—the Japanese fatherland against the American, the American against the Japanese, the French against the British, and so forth! Gentlemen, knights of the Second and Two-and-a-Half Internationals, pacifist petty bourgeoisie and philistines of the entire world, go on "evading" the question of how to combat imperialist wars by issuing new "Basle Manifestos" (on the model of the Basle Manifesto of 1912<sup>248</sup>). *The first Bolshevik revolution has wrested the first hundred million people of this earth from the clutches of imperialist war and the imperialist world.* Subsequent revolutions will deliver the rest of mankind from such wars and from such a world.

Our last, but most important and most difficult task, the one we have done least about, is economic development, the laying of economic foundations for the new, socialist edifice on the site of the demolished feudal edifice and the semi-demolished capitalist edifice. It is in this most important and most difficult task that we have sustained the greatest number of reverses and have made most mistakes. How could anyone expect that a task so new to the world could be begun without reverses and without mistakes! But we have begun it. We shall continue it. At this very moment we are, by our New Economic Policy, correcting a number of our mistakes. We are learning how to continue erecting the socialist edifice in a small-peasant country without committing such mistakes.

The difficulties are immense. But we are accustomed to grappling with immense difficulties. Not for nothing do our enemies

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call us "stone-hard" and exponents of a "firm-line policy". But we have also learned, at least to some extent, another art that is essential in revolution, namely, flexibility, the ability to effect swift and sudden changes of tactics if changes in objective conditions demand them, and to choose another path for the achievement of our goal if the former path proves to be inexpedient or impossible at the given moment.

Borne along on the crest of the wave of enthusiasm, rousing first the political enthusiasm and then the military enthusiasm of the people, we expected to accomplish economic tasks just as great as the political and military tasks we had accomplished by relying directly on this enthusiasm. We expected—or perhaps it would be truer to say that we presumed without having given it adequate consideration—to be able to organise the state production and the state distribution of products on communist lines in a small-peasant country directly as ordered by the proletarian state. Experience has proved that we were wrong. It appears that a number of transitional stages were necessary—state capitalism and socialism—in order to *prepare*—to prepare by many years of effort—for the transition to communism. Not directly relying on enthusiasm, but aided by the enthusiasm engendered by the great revolution, and on the basis of personal interest, personal incentive and business principles, we must first set to work in this small-peasant country to build solid gangways to socialism by way of state capitalism. Otherwise we shall never get to communism, we shall never bring scores of millions of people to communism. That is what experience, the objective course of the development of the revolution, has taught us.

And we, who during these three or four years have learned a little to make abrupt changes of front (when abrupt changes of front are needed), have begun zealously, attentively and sedulously (although still not zealously, attentively and sedulously enough) to learn to make a new change of front, namely, the New Economic Policy. The proletarian state must become a cautious, assiduous and shrewd "businessman", a punctilious *wholesale merchant*—otherwise it will never succeed in putting this small-peasant country economically on its feet. Under existing conditions, living as we are side by side with the capitalist (for the time being capitalist) West, there is no other way of progressing to communism. A wholesale merchant seems to be an economic type as remote from communism as heaven from earth. But that is one of the contradictions which, in actual life, lead from a small-peasant economy via state capitalism to socialism. Personal incentive will step up production; we must increase production first and foremost and at all costs. Wholesale trade economically unites millions of small peasants: it gives them a personal incen-



tive, links them up and leads them to the next step, namely, to various forms of association and alliance in the process of production itself. We have already started the necessary changes in our economic policy and already have some successes to our credit; true, they are small and partial, but nonetheless they are successes. In this new field of "tuition" we are already finishing our preparatory class. By persistent and assiduous study, by making practical experience the test of every step we take, by not fearing to alter over and over again what we have already begun, by correcting our mistakes and most carefully analysing their significance, we shall pass to the higher classes. We shall go through the whole "course", although the present state of world economics and world politics has made that course much longer and much more difficult than we would have liked. No matter at what cost, no matter how severe the hardships of the transition period may be—despite disaster, famine and ruin—we shall not flinch; we shall triumphantly carry our cause to its goal.

October 14, 1921

*Pravda* No 234, October 15, 1921  
Signed: *N. Lenin*

*Collected Works*, Vol. 33,  
pp. 51-59

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## THE IMPORTANCE OF GOLD NOW AND AFTER THE COMPLETE VICTORY OF SOCIALISM

The best way to celebrate the anniversary of a great revolution is to concentrate attention on its unsolved problems. It is particularly appropriate and necessary to celebrate the revolution in this way at a time when we are faced with fundamental problems that the revolution has not yet solved, and when we must master something new (from the point of view of what the revolution has accomplished up to now) for the solution of these problems.

What is new for our revolution at the present time is the need for a "reformist", gradual, cautious and roundabout approach to the solution of the fundamental problems of economic development. This "novelty" gives rise to a number of questions, perplexities and doubts in both theory and practice.

A theoretical question. How can we explain the transition from a series of extremely revolutionary actions to extremely "reformist" actions in the same field at a time when the revolution as a whole is making victorious progress? Does it not imply a "surrender of positions", an "admission of defeat", or something of that sort? Of course, our enemies—from the semi-feudal type of reactionaries to the Mensheviks or other knights of the Two-and-a-Half International—say that it does. They would not be enemies if they did not shout something of the sort on every pretext, and even without any pretext. The touching unanimity that prevails on this question among all parties, from the feudal reactionaries to the Mensheviks, is only further proof that all these parties constitute "one reactionary mass" opposed to the proletarian revolution (as Engels foresaw in his letters to Bebel of 1875 and 1884—be it said in parenthesis).<sup>24)</sup>

But there is "perplexity", shall we say, among friends, too.

Restore large-scale industry, organise the direct exchange of its goods for the produce of small-peasant farming, and thus

assist the socialisation of the latter. For the purpose of restoring large-scale industry, borrow from the peasants a certain quantity of foodstuffs and raw materials by requisitioning—this was the plan (or method, system) that we followed for more than three years, up to the spring of 1921. This was a revolutionary approach to the problem—to break up the old social-economic system completely at one stroke and to substitute a new one for it.

Since the spring of 1921, instead of this approach, plan, method, or mode of action, we have been adopting (we have not yet “adopted” but are still “adopting,” and have not yet fully realised it) a totally different method, a reformist type of method: not to *break up* the old social-economic system—trade, petty production, petty proprietorship, capitalism—but to *revive* trade, petty proprietorship, capitalism, while cautiously and gradually getting the upper hand over them, or making it possible to subject them to state regulation *only to the extent* that they revive.

That is an entirely different approach to the problem.

Compared with the previous, revolutionary, approach, it is a reformist approach (revolution is a change which breaks the old order to its very foundations, and not one that cautiously, slowly and gradually remodels it, taking care to break as little as possible).

The question that arises is this. If, after trying revolutionary methods, you find they have failed and adopt reformist methods, does it not prove that you are declaring the revolution to have been a mistake in general? Does it not prove that you should not have started with the revolution but should have started with reforms and confined yourself to them?

That is the conclusion which the Mensheviks and others like them have drawn. But this conclusion is either sophistry, a mere fraud perpetrated by case-hardened politicians, or it is the childishness of political tyros. The greatest, perhaps the only danger to the genuine revolutionary is that of exaggerated revolutionism, ignoring the limits and conditions in which revolutionary methods are appropriate and can be successfully employed. True revolutionaries have mostly come a cropper when they began to write “revolution” with a capital R, to elevate “revolution” to something almost divine, to lose their heads, to lose the ability to reflect, weigh and ascertain in the coolest and most dispassionate manner at what moment, under what circumstances and in which sphere of action you must act in a revolutionary manner, and at what moment, under what circumstances and in which sphere you must turn to reformist action. True revolutionaries will perish (not that they will be defeated from outside, but that their work will suffer internal collapse) only if they abandon their sober outlook and take it into their heads that the

"great, victorious, world" revolution can and must solve all problems in a revolutionary manner under all circumstances and in all spheres of action. If they do this, their doom is certain.

Whoever get such ideas into his head is lost because he has foolish ideas about a fundamental problem; and in a fierce war (and revolution is the fiercest sort of war) the penalty for folly is defeat.

What grounds are there for assuming that the "great, victorious, world" revolution can and must employ only revolutionary methods? There are none at all. The assumption is a pure fallacy; this can be proved by purely theoretical propositions if we stick to Marxism. The experience of our revolution also shows that it is a fallacy. From the theoretical point of view—foolish things are done in time of revolution just as at any other time, said Engels,<sup>250</sup> and he was right. We must try to do as few foolish things as possible, and rectify those that are done as quickly as possible, and we must, as soberly as we can, estimate which problems can be solved by revolutionary methods at any given time and which cannot. From the point of view of our practical experience the Brest peace was an example of action that was not revolutionary at all; it was reformist, and even worse, because it was a retreat, whereas, as a general rule, reformist action advances slowly, cautiously, gradually, and does not move backward. The proof that our tactics in concluding the Brest peace were correct is now so complete, so obvious to all and generally admitted, that there is no need to say any more about it.

Our revolution has completed only its bourgeois-democratic work; and we have every right to be proud of this. The proletarian or socialist part of its work may be summed up in three main points: (1) The revolutionary withdrawal from the imperialist world war; the exposure and *halting* of the slaughter organised by the two world groups of capitalist predators—for our part we have done this in full; others could have done it only if there had been a revolution in a number of advanced countries. (2) The establishment of the Soviet system, as a form of the dictatorship of the proletariat. An epoch-making change has been made. The era of bourgeois-democratic parliamentarism has come to an end. A new chapter in world history—the era of proletarian dictatorship—has been opened. The Soviet system and all forms of proletarian dictatorship will have the finishing touches put to them and be completed only by the efforts of a number of countries. There is still a great deal we have not done in this field. It would be unpardonable to lose sight of this. Again and again we shall have to improve the work, re-do it, start from the beginning. Every step onward and upward that we take in developing our productive forces and our culture must be accompanied

by the work of improving and altering our Soviet system—we are still low in the scale of economics and culture. Much will have to be altered, and to be “embarrassed” by this would be absurd (if not worse). (3) The creation of the economic basis of the socialist system; the main features of what is most important, most fundamental, have not yet been completed. This, however, is our soundest basis, soundest from the point of view of principle and from the practical point of view, from the point of view of the R.S.F.S.R. today and from the international point of view.

Since the main features of this basis have not yet been completed we must concentrate all our attention upon it. The difficulty here lies in the form of the transition.

In April 1918, in my *Immediate Tasks of the Soviet Government*,\* I wrote:

“It is not enough to be a revolutionary and an adherent of socialism or a Communist in general. You must be able at each particular moment to find the particular link in the chain which you must grasp with all your might in order to hold the whole chain and to prepare firmly for the transition to the next link; the order of the links, their form, the manner in which they are linked together, their difference from each other in the historical chain of events are not as simple and not as senseless as those in an ordinary chain made by a smith.”

At the present time, in the sphere of activity with which we are dealing, this link is the revival of home *trade* under proper state regulation (direction). Trade is the “link” in the historical chain of events, in the transitional forms of our socialist construction in 1921-22, which we, the proletarian government, we, the ruling Communist Party, “*must grasp with all our might*”. If we “grasp” this link firmly enough *now* we shall certainly control the *whole* chain in the very near future. If we do not, we shall not control the whole chain, we shall not create the foundation for socialist social and economic relations.

Communism and trade?! It sounds strange. The two seem to be unconnected, incongruous, poles apart. But if we study it from the point of view of *economics*, we shall find that the one is no more remote from the other than communism is from small-peasant, patriarchal farming.

When we are victorious on a world scale I think we shall use gold for the purpose of building public lavatories in the streets of some of the largest cities of the world. This would be the most “just” and most educational way of utilising gold for the benefit of those generations which have not forgotten how, for the sake

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See present edition, Vol. 2, p. 615.—Ed.

of gold, ten million men were killed and thirty million maimed in the "great war for freedom", the war of 1914-18, the war that was waged to decide the great question of which peace was the worst, that of Brest or that of Versailles; and how, for the sake of this same gold, they certainly intend to kill twenty million men and to maim sixty million in a war, say, in 1925, or 1928, between, say, Japan and the U.S.A., or between Britain and the U.S.A., or something like that.

But however "just", useful, or humane it would be to utilise gold for this purpose, we nevertheless say that we must work for another decade or two with the same intensity and with the same success as in the 1917-21 period, only in a much wider field, in order to reach this stage. Meanwhile, we must save the gold in the R.S.F.S.R., sell it at the highest price, buy goods with it at the lowest price. When you live among wolves, you must howl like a wolf, while as for exterminating all the wolves, as should be done in a rational human society, we shall act up to the wise Russian proverb: "Boast not before but after the battle".

Trade is the only possible economic link between the scores of millions of small farmers and large-scale industry *if... if* there is not alongside these farmers an excellently equipped large-scale machine industry with a network of power transmission lines, an industry whose technical equipment, organisational "superstructures" and other features are sufficient to enable it to supply the small farmers with the best goods in larger quantities, more quickly and more cheaply than before. On a world scale this "*if*" *has already been achieved*, this condition already exists. But the country, formerly one of the most backward capitalist countries, which tried alone directly and at one stroke to create, to put into use, to organise practically the *new* links between industry and agriculture, failed to achieve this task by "direct assault", and must now try to achieve it by a number of slow, gradual, and cautious "siege" operations.

The proletarian government can control trade, direct it into definite channels, keep it within certain limits. I shall give a small, a very small example. In the Donets Basin a slight, still very slight, but undoubted revival in the economy has commenced, partly due to a rise in the productivity of labour at the large state mines, and partly due to the leasing of small mines to peasants. As a result, the proletarian government is receiving a small additional quantity (a miserably small quantity compared with what is obtained in the advanced countries, but an appreciable quantity considering our poverty-stricken condition) of coal at a cost of, say, 100; and it is selling this coal to various government departments at a price of, say, 120, and to private individuals at a price of, say, 140. (I must say in parenthesis that my

figures are quite arbitrary, first because I do not know the exact figures, and, secondly, I would not now make them public even if I did.) This looks as if we are *beginning*, if only in very modest dimensions, to control *exchange* between industry and agriculture, to control wholesale trade, to cope with the task of taking in hand the available, small, backward industry, or large-scale but weakened and ruined industry; of reviving trade on the *present* economic basis; of making the ordinary middle peasant (and that is the typical peasant, the peasant in the mass, the true representative of the petty-bourgeois milieu) feel the benefit of the economic revival; of taking advantage of it for the purpose of more systematically and persistently, more widely and successfully restoring large-scale industry.

We shall not surrender to "sentimental socialism", or to the old Russian, semi-aristocratic, semi-muzhik and patriarchal mood, with their supreme contempt for trade. We can use, and, since it is necessary, we *must* learn to use, all transitional economic forms for the purpose of strengthening the link between the peasantry and the proletariat, for the purpose of immediately reviving the economy of our ruined and tormented country, of improving industry, and facilitating such future, more extensive and more deep-going, measures as electrification.

Marxism alone has precisely and correctly defined the relation of reforms to revolution, although Marx was able to see this relation only from one aspect—under the conditions preceding the first to any extent permanent and lasting victory of the proletariat, if only in one country. Under those conditions, the basis of the proper relation was that reforms are a by-product of the revolutionary class struggle of the proletariat. Throughout the capitalist world this relation is the foundation of the revolutionary tactics of the proletariat—the ABC, which is being distorted and obscured by the corrupt leaders of the Second International and the half-pedantic and half-finicky knights of the Two-and-a-Half International. After the victory of the proletariat, if only in one country, something new enters into the relation between reforms and revolution. In principle, it is the same as before, but a change in form takes place, which Marx himself could not foresee, but which can be appreciated only on the basis of the philosophy and politics of Marxism. Why were we able to carry out the Brest retreat successfully? Because we had advanced so far that we had room in which to retreat. At such dizzy speed, *in a few weeks*, from October 25, 1917, to the Brest peace, we built up the Soviet state, withdrew from the imperialist war in a revolutionary manner and completed the bourgeois-democratic revolution so that *even* the great backward movement (the Brest peace) left us sufficient room in which to take advan-

tage of the "respite" and to march forward victoriously against Kolchak, Denikin, Yudenich, Pilsudski and Wrangel.

Before the victory of the proletariat, reforms are a by-product of the revolutionary class struggle. After the victory (while still remaining a "by-product" on an international scale) they are, in addition, for the country in which victory has been achieved, a necessary and legitimate breathing space when, after the utmost exertion of effort, it becomes obvious that sufficient strength is lacking for the revolutionary accomplishment of some transition or another. Victory creates such a "reserve of strength" that it is possible to hold out even in a forced retreat, hold out both materially and morally. Holding out materially means preserving a sufficient superiority of forces to prevent the enemy from inflicting utter defeat. Holding out morally means not allowing oneself to become demoralised and disorganised, keeping a sober view of the situation, preserving vigour and firmness of spirit, even retreating a long way, but not too far, and in such a way as to stop the retreat in time and revert to the offensive.

We retreated to state capitalism, but we did not retreat too far. We are now retreating to the state regulation of trade, but we shall not retreat too far. There are visible signs that the retreat is coming to an end; there are signs that we shall be able to stop this retreat in the not too distant future. The more conscious, the more unanimous, the more free from prejudice we are in carrying out this necessary retreat, the sooner shall we be able to stop it, and the more lasting, speedy and extensive will be our subsequent victorious advance.

November 5, 1921

*Pravda* No 251, November 6-7, 1921  
Signed. *N. Lenin*

*Collected Works*, Vol 33  
pp. 109 16



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## ***DIRECTIVES FOR THE SOVIET DELEGATION TO THE GENOA CONFERENCE***<sup>251</sup>

### **1**

#### **DRAFT DIRECTIVES OF THE C.C., R.C.P.(B.) FOR THE SOVIET DELEGATION TO THE GENOA CONFERENCE**

I propose the following draft of C.C. directives:

Without endorsing the list of experts, the C.C. directs the candidates nominated in it to submit within a week a *précis* of *programme* and *tactics* (on questions that come within the terms of reference of the given expert) for *the whole* Genoa Conference. All People's Commissars are obliged within 2 days to give *written* testimonials and guarantees for their candidates nominated as experts. Should the experts disgrace themselves in Europe they and the People's Commissars will be held responsible.

In furtherance of the directives concerning the Genoa Conference *I propose the following*:

1. Without pre-determining in what form and at what time the speeches of our delegation should be made, the C.C. considers that the delegation is definitely obliged to develop a full, independent and integral programme on all cardinal issues.

2. This programme should be a bourgeois-pacifist programme with the reservation, timely and clearly expressed by our delegation, that we do not put forward here a communist programme—the only one that is in keeping with our views—(set it forth briefly) because we wish to put before the other delegations, who hold fundamentally different views, a number of palliatives and measures of a reformist type which have already been proposed in parts in Britain and other capitalist countries by people who share bourgeois views. Under certain conditions this programme of palliatives could serve to mitigate the present difficult situation (the only real way out of which is possible given a final break with all the principles of capitalist property).

3. A tentative list of the main points of this programme:

- (1) annulment of all debts;
- (2) application of the "Irish" solution<sup>252</sup> to all colonies and dependent countries and nations;

- (3) radical revision of the Versailles Treaty;
- (4) the granting of loans on favourable terms to the countries most ruined by the war and too weak to recover their own feet, while being most important for world economy as eventual suppliers of vast quantities of food and raw materials;
- (5) establishment of a unified international gold unit for the currency systems of a number of countries and measures to introduce this unit;
- (6) an agreement among a number of countries on measures to combat inflation and depreciation of money (enumerate some of these measures);
- (7) agreement among a number of countries on measures for coping with the fuel crisis and on measures for the most rational and economical use of power resources on the basis of unified planned electrification;
- (8) the same in regard to the most urgent measures for reorganising and improving international transport to handle deliveries of raw materials and food.

And so on.

4. Such a programme should be elaborated in speeches, and if this is impossible, printed in 3-4 European languages and handed out to the delegates and the press (if only in the form of a *précis*). (In any case it should be printed.)

5. Only such people should be admitted as experts who are capable of developing, and making out a case for such a programme (in one or another part of it) and who have *proved this capability*. The experts will have to have their programmes and plans printed *for Europe over their own signatures*. ((Such a programme will evoke comment in the press of the Third International, whose articles will say: this attempt "to convince" will do no harm, but practically it is useless, because what is *needed* is a *revolution*; and in the press of the II and II<sup>1/2</sup> Internationals—we shall see what they have to say.))

Written on February 6, 1922

First published in full in 1964 in the  
Fifth Russian Edition of the  
*Collected Works*, Vol. 44

*Collected Works*, Vol. 42,  
pp. 396-98

## 2

### LETTER TO G. V. CHICHERIN

Comrade Chicherin!

You are letting your nerves run away with you. We shall still have time on 22 or 23/II to discuss the plan of conduct at Genoa.

You and I have both fought against pacifism as a programme for the revolutionary proletarian party. That much is clear. But who has ever denied the use of pacifists by that party to soften up the enemy, the bourgeoisie?<sup>253</sup>

Yours,  
*Lenin*

Written on February 16, 1922

First published in 1965 in the Fifth  
Russian Edition of the *Collected*  
*Works*, Vol. 54

*Collected Works*, Vol. 45,  
pp. 474-75

### 3

## DRAFT DECISION FOR THE C.C., R.C.P.(B.) ON THE TASKS OF THE SOVIET DELEGATION AT GENOA

Only for circulation among members of the Politbureau  
Draft decision for the C.C.

1. The C.C. recognises as correct the appraisal of the situation and the tasks (of our delegation at Genoa) as given in the theses of Comrade Litvinov.

2. The C.C. fully empowers Vice Chairman Chicherin to act as chairman of the delegation.

3. In the event of Comrade Chicherin's illness or departure his powers shall be vested in turn in one of the two trios: a) Litvinov, Krasin, Rakovsky; b) Litvinov, Joffe, Vorovsky.

4. Our delegation should try to evade the question of acceptance of the Cannes terms.<sup>254</sup> Failing this, and in the event of our being presented with a direct ultimatum, we should try to work Krasin's formula: "All countries recognise their state debts and undertake to compensate damage and losses caused by the acts of their governments."

If this does not work either, we should make for a break, declaring definitely that we are prepared to recognise private debts, but that, not wishing to play hide-and-seek, we point out that we consider them covered, together with the whole sum of our obligations, by our counter-claims. We accept no chief umpire between us and all the bourgeois countries, since the dispute is between two systems of property.

If we have to break, we should make it perfectly clear that the main and sole reason for the break is the greed of a handful of private capitalists, Urquhart, etc., whom the governments serve.

As a maximum concession these capitalists can be offered: a preferential right to concessions (i.e., if we grant X a concession on their former property wholly or in part on such-and-such terms, we undertake to give it to its former owner on the same terms).

5. In view of the possibility of the bourgeois trying to prevent us from developing our programme, we should make every effort in the very first speech to set forth, if not develop, this programme, or at least outline it (and immediately publish it in greater detail).

6. In our programme we should, without concealing our communist views, confine ourselves to a brief and passing mention of them (for instance, in a subordinate clause), and to a forthright statement to the effect that we do not consider this the right place to preach our views, since we have come for trade agreements and for an attempt to reach an agreement with the pacifist section of the other (bourgeois) camp.

By the pacifist section of that camp (or some other well-chosen polite expression) we should make it clear that we mean the petty-bourgeois, pacifist and semi-pacifist democrats of the II and II<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub> International type, and the Keynes type, etc.

One of our main, if not principal, political tasks at Genoa is to single out this wing of the bourgeois camp from the rest of the camp, try to flatter that wing, make it known that we consider possible and desirable not only a trade, but a political agreement with them (as one of the few chances of capitalism's peaceful evolution towards the new order, which we, Communists, do not greatly believe in, but which we agree and consider our duty to help try out, as representatives of one power in face of a hostile majority of other powers).

Everything possible and even impossible should be done to strengthen the pacifist wing of the bourgeoisie and increase if only slightly its chances of success at the elections. This first and foremost. Secondly, to disunite the bourgeois countries that will be united against us at Genoa—such is our dual political task at Genoa, and not at all the development of communist views.

7. Every attempt should be made to develop at length and publicise as widely as possible (in print, if not in speeches) the plan for the rehabilitation of the national economy in Russia and in Europe—in the spirit of the State Planning Commission's researches and on the basis of these researches.

8. If the bourgeois camp in Genoa presents an ultimatum to us not to touch on questions of pacifism. But to speak only on narrow trade subjects, we should express our regret, but comply with this ultimatum, saying that we had two aims at this conference—a pacifist aim and a trade aim. This will leave only one.

9. The C.C. leaves it to the delegation to elaborate the pacifist programme, confining itself to the general directive that they should

try to develop it as broadly as possible in order to split the pacifist camp of the international bourgeoisie away from the gross-bourgeois, aggressive-bourgeois, reactionary-bourgeois camp.

10. On the question of trade and concessions (including the question of loans), the forests of the North, etc., should be put forward as the principal guarantee. We agree to no derogation of the rights of our state. No agreements are to be signed without the special consent, by telegraph, of the Central Committee.

*Lenin*

Written on February 24, 1922

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Russian Edition of the  
*Collected Works*, Vol. 44

*Collected Works*, Vol 42,  
pp. 401-04

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## ON THE SIGNIFICANCE OF MILITANT MATERIALISM

Comrade Trotsky has already said everything necessary, and said it very well, about the general purposes of *Pod Znamenem Marksizma*<sup>255</sup> in issue No 1-2 of that journal. I should like to deal with certain questions that more closely define the content and programme of the work which its editors have set forth in the introductory statement in this issue.

This statement says that not all those gathered round the journal *Pod Znamenem Marksizma* are Communists but that they are all consistent materialists. I think that this alliance of Communists and non-Communists is absolutely essential and correctly defines the purposes of the journal. One of the biggest and most dangerous mistakes made by Communists (as generally by revolutionaries who have successfully accomplished the beginning of a great revolution) is the idea that a revolution can be made by revolutionaries alone. On the contrary, to be successful, all serious revolutionary work requires that the idea that revolutionaries are capable of playing the part only of the vanguard of the truly virile and advanced class must be understood and translated into action. A vanguard performs its task as vanguard only when it is able to avoid being isolated from the mass of the people it leads and is able really to lead the whole mass forward. Without an alliance with non-Communists in the most diverse spheres of activity there can be no question of any successful communist construction.

This also applies to the defence of materialism and Marxism, which has been undertaken by *Pod Znamenem Marksizma*. Fortunately, the main trends of advanced social thinking in Russia have a solid materialist tradition. Apart from G. V. Plekhanov, it will be enough to mention Chernyshevsky, from whom the modern Narodniks (the Popular Socialists,<sup>256</sup> Socialist-Revolutionaries, etc.) have frequently retreated in quest of fashionable

reactionary philosophical doctrines, captivated by the tinsel of the so-called last word in European science, and unable to discern beneath this tinsel some variety of servility to the bourgeoisie, to bourgeois prejudice and bourgeois reaction.

At any rate, in Russia we still have—and shall undoubtedly have for a fairly long time to come—materialists from the non-communist camp, and it is our absolute duty to enlist all adherents of consistent and militant materialism in the joint work of combating philosophical reaction and the philosophical prejudices of so-called educated society. Dietzgen senior—not to be confused with his writer son, who was as pretentious as he was unsuccessful—correctly, aptly and clearly expressed the fundamental Marxist view of the philosophical trends which prevail in bourgeois countries and enjoy the regard of their scientists and publicists, when he said that in effect the professors of philosophy in modern society are in the majority of cases nothing but “graduated flunkys of clericalism”.<sup>257</sup>

Our Russian intellectuals, who, like their brethren in all other countries, are fond of thinking themselves advanced, are very much averse to shifting the question to the level of the opinion expressed in Dietzgen’s words. But they are averse to it because they cannot look the truth in the face. One has only to give a little thought to the governmental and also the general economic, social and every other kind of dependence of modern educated people on the ruling bourgeoisie to realise that Dietzgen’s scathing description was absolutely true. One has only to recall the vast majority of the fashionable philosophical trends that arise so frequently in European countries, beginning for example with those connected with the discovery of radium and ending with those which are now seeking to clutch at the skirts of Einstein, to gain an idea of the connection between the class interests and the class position of the bourgeoisie and its support of all forms of religion on the one hand, and the ideological content of the fashionable philosophical trends on the other.

It will be seen from the above that a journal that sets out to be a militant materialist organ must be primarily a militant organ, in the sense of unflinchingly exposing and indicting all modern “graduated flunkys of clericalism”, irrespective of whether they act as representatives of official science or as free lances calling themselves “democratic Left or ideologically socialist” publicists.

In the second place, such a journal must be a militant atheist organ. We have departments, or at least state institutions, which are in charge of this work. But the work is being carried on with extreme apathy and very unsatisfactorily, and is apparently suffering from the general conditions of our truly Russian (even

though Soviet) bureaucratic ways. It is therefore highly essential that in addition to the work of these state institutions, and in order to improve and infuse life into that work, a journal which sets out to propagandise militant materialism must carry on untiring atheist propaganda and an untiring atheist fight. The literature on the subject in all languages should be carefully followed and everything at all valuable in this sphere should be translated, or at least reviewed.

Engels long ago advised the contemporary leaders of the proletariat to translate the militant atheist literature of the late eighteenth century<sup>258</sup> for mass distribution among the people. We have not done this up to the present, to our shame be it said (this is one of the numerous proofs that it is much easier to seize power in a revolutionary epoch than to know how to use this power properly). Our apathy, inactivity and incompetence are sometimes excused on all sorts of "lofty" grounds, as, for example, that the old atheist literature of the eighteenth century is antiquated, unscientific, naïve, etc. There is nothing worse than such pseudo-scientific sophistry, which serves as a screen either for pedantry or for a complete misunderstanding of Marxism. There is, of course, much that is unscientific and naïve in the atheist writings of the eighteenth-century revolutionaries. But nobody prevents the publishers of these writings from abridging them and providing them with brief postscripts pointing out the progress made by mankind in the scientific criticism of religions since the end of the eighteenth century, mentioning the latest writings on the subject, and so forth. It would be the biggest and most grievous mistake a Marxist could make to think that the millions of the people (especially the peasants and artisans), who have been condemned by all modern society to darkness, ignorance and superstition, can extricate themselves from this darkness only along the straight line of a purely Marxist education. These masses should be supplied with the most varied atheist propaganda material, they should be made familiar with facts from the most diverse spheres of life, they should be approached in every possible way, so as to interest them, rouse them from their religious torpor, stir them from the most varied angles and by the most varied methods, and so forth.

The keen, vivacious and talented writings of the old eighteenth-century atheists wittily and openly attacked the prevailing clericalism and will very often prove a thousand times more suitable for arousing people from their religious torpor than the dull and dry paraphrases of Marxism, almost completely unillustrated by skilfully selected facts, which predominate in our literature and which (it is no use hiding the fact) frequently distort Marxism. We have translations of all the major works of



Marx and Engels. There are absolutely no grounds for fearing that the old atheism and old materialism will remain unsupplemented by the corrections introduced by Marx and Engels. The most important thing—and it is this that is most frequently overlooked by those of our Communists who are supposedly Marxists, but who in fact mutilate Marxism—is to know how to awaken in the still undeveloped masses an intelligent attitude towards religious questions and an intelligent criticism of religions.

On the other hand, take a glance at modern scientific critics of religion. These educated bourgeois writers almost invariably “supplement” their own refutations of religious superstitions with arguments which immediately expose them as ideological slaves of the bourgeoisie, as “graduated flunkys of clericalism”.

Two examples. Professor R. Y. Wipper published in 1918 a little book entitled *Uozniknovenie Khristianstva* (The Origin of Christianity—Pharos Publishing House, Moscow). In his account of the principal results of modern science, the author not only refrains from combating the superstitions and deception which are the weapons of the church as a political organisation, not only evades these questions, but makes the simply ridiculous and most reactionary claim that he is above both “extremes”—the idealist and the materialist. This is toadying to the ruling bourgeoisie, which all over the world devotes to the support of religion hundreds of millions of rubles from the profits squeezed out of the working people.

The well-known German scientist, Arthur Drews, while refuting religious superstitions and fables in his book, *Die Christusmythe* (The Christ Myth), and while showing that Christ never existed, at the end of the book declares in favour of religion, albeit a renovated, purified and more subtle religion, one that would be capable of withstanding “the daily growing naturalist torrent” (fourth German edition, 1910, p. 238). Here we have an outspoken and deliberate reactionary, who is openly helping the exploiters to replace the old, decayed religious superstitions by new, more odious and vile superstitions.

This does not mean that Drews should not be translated. It means that while in a certain measure effecting an alliance with the progressive section of the bourgeoisie. Communists and all consistent materialists should unflinchingly expose that section when it is guilty of reaction. It means that to shun an alliance with the representatives of the bourgeoisie of the eighteenth century, i.e., the period when it was revolutionary, would be to betray Marxism and materialism; for an “alliance” with the Drewses, in one form or another and in one degree or another, is essential for our struggle against the predominating religious obscurantists.

*Pod Znamenem Marksizma*, which sets out to be an organ of

militant materialism, should devote much of its space to atheist propaganda, to reviews of the literature on the subject and to correcting the immense shortcomings of our governmental work in this field. It is particularly important to utilise books and pamphlets which contain many concrete facts and comparisons showing how the class interests and class organisations of the modern bourgeoisie are connected with the organisations of religious institutions and religious propaganda.

All material relating to the United States of America, where the official, state connection between religion and capital is less manifest, is extremely important. But, on the other hand, it becomes all the clearer to us that so-called modern democracy (which the Mensheviks, the Socialist-Revolutionaries, partly also the anarchists, etc., so unreasonably worship) is nothing but the freedom to preach whatever is to the advantage of the bourgeoisie, to preach, namely, the most reactionary ideas, religion, obscurantism, defence of the exploiters, etc.

One would like to hope that a journal which sets out to be a militant materialist organ will provide our reading public with reviews of atheist literature, showing for which circle of readers any particular writing might be suitable and in what respect, and mentioning what literature has been published in our country (only decent translations should be given notice, and they are not so many), and what is still to be published.

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In addition to the alliance with consistent materialists who do not belong to the Communist Party, of no less and perhaps even of more importance for the work which militant materialism should perform is an alliance with those modern natural scientists who incline towards materialism and are not afraid to defend and preach it as against the modish philosophical wanderings into idealism and scepticism which are prevalent in so-called educated society.

The article by A. Timiryazev on Einstein's theory of relativity published in *Pod Znamieniem Marksizma* No. 1-2 permits us to hope that the journal will succeed in effecting this second alliance too. Greater attention should be paid to it. It should be remembered that the sharp upheaval which modern natural science is undergoing very often gives rise to reactionary philosophical schools and minor schools, trends and minor trends. Unless, therefore, the problems raised by the recent revolution in natural science are followed, and unless natural scientists are enlisted in the work of a philosophical journal, militant materialism can be neither militant nor materialism. Timiryazev was obliged to observe in the first issue of the journal that the theory of Ein-

stein, who, according to Timiryazev, is himself not making any active attack on the foundations of materialism, has already been seized upon by a vast number of bourgeois intellectuals of all countries; it should be noted that this applies not only to Einstein, but to a number, if not to the majority, of the great reformers of natural science since the end of the nineteenth century.

For our attitude towards this phenomenon to be a politically conscious one, it must be realised that no natural science and no materialism can hold its own in the struggle against the onslaught of bourgeois ideas and the restoration of the bourgeois world outlook unless it stands on solid philosophical ground. In order to hold his own in this struggle and carry it to a victorious finish, the natural scientist must be a modern materialist, a conscious adherent of the materialism represented by Marx, i.e., he must be a dialectical materialist. In order to attain this aim, the contributors to *Pod Znamenem Marksizma* must arrange for the systematic study of Hegelian dialectics from a materialist standpoint, i.e., the dialectics which Marx applied practically in his *Capital* and in his historical and political works, and applied so successfully that now every day of the awakening to life and struggle of new classes in the East (Japan, India, and China)—i.e., the hundreds of millions of human beings who form the greater part of the world population and whose historical passivity and historical torpor have hitherto conditioned the stagnation and decay of many advanced European countries—every day of the awakening to life of new peoples and new classes serves as a fresh confirmation of Marxism.

Of course, this study, this interpretation, this propaganda of Hegelian dialectics is extremely difficult, and the first experiments in this direction will undoubtedly be accompanied by errors. But only he who never does anything never makes mistakes. Taking as our basis Marx's method of applying materialistically conceived Hegelian dialectics, we can and should elaborate this dialectics from all aspects, print in the journal excerpts from Hegel's principal works, interpret them materialistically and comment on them with the help of examples of the way Marx applied dialectics, as well as of examples of dialectics in the sphere of economic and political relations, which recent history, especially modern imperialist war and revolution, provides in unusual abundance. In my opinion, the editors and contributors of *Pod Znamenem Marksizma* should be a kind of "Society of Materialist Friends of Hegelian Dialectics". Modern natural scientists (if they know how to seek, and if we learn to help them) will find in the Hegelian dialectics, materialistically interpreted, a series of answers to the philosophical problems which are being raised by the revolution in natural

science and which make the intellectual admirers of bourgeois fashion "stumble" into reaction

Unless it sets itself such a task and systematically fulfils it, materialism cannot be militant materialism. It will be not so much the fighter as the fought,<sup>25</sup> to use an expression of Shchedrin's. Without this, eminent natural scientists will as often as hitherto be helpless in making their philosophical deductions and generalisations. For natural science is progressing so fast and is undergoing such a profound revolutionary upheaval in all spheres that it cannot possibly dispense with philosophical deductions.

In conclusion, I will cite an example which has nothing to do with philosophy, but does at any rate concern social questions, to which *Pod Znamennem Marksizma* also desires to devote attention.

It is an example of the way in which modern pseudo science actually serves as a vehicle for the grossest and most infamous reactionary views.

I was recently sent a copy of *Ekonomist* No. 1 (1922), published by the Eleventh Department of the Russian Technical Society.<sup>26</sup> The young Communist who sent me this journal (he probably had no time to read it) rashly expressed considerable agreement with it. In reality the journal is—I do not know to what extent deliberately—an organ of the modern feudalists, disguised of course under a cloak of science, democracy and so forth.

A certain Mr. P. A. Sorokin publishes in this journal an extensive so-called "sociological" inquiry on "The Influence of the War." This learned article abounds in learned references to the sociological works of the author and his numerous teachers and colleagues abroad. Here is an example of his learning:

On page 83, I read:

For every 10 000 marriages in Petrograd there are now 922 divorces—a fantastic figure. Of every 100 small marriages 51.1 had lasted less than one year, 11 per cent less than one month, 22 per cent less than two months, 41 per cent less than three to six months and only 9.6 per cent over six months. These figures show that modern legal marriage is a form which conceals what is in effect extra-marital sexual intercourse, enabling lovers of strawberries to satisfy their appetites in a legal way. (*Ekonomist* No. 1, p. 83)

Both this gentleman and the Russian Technical Society, which publishes this journal and gives space to this kind of talk, no doubt regard themselves as adherents of democracy and would consider it a great insult to be called what they are in fact, namely, feudalists, reactionaries, "graduated" onkeys of clericalism.

Even the slightest acquaintance with the legislation of bourgeois countries on marriage, divorce and illegitimate children, and with the actual state of affairs in this field, is enough to show anyone interested in the subject that modern bourgeois democracy even in all the most democratic bourgeois republics, exhibits a truly

feudal attitude in this respect towards women and towards children born out of wedlock.

This, of course, does not prevent the Mensheviks, the Socialist-Revolutionaries, a part of the anarchists and all the corresponding parties in the West from shouting about democracy and how it is being violated by the Bolsheviks. But as a matter of fact the Bolshevik revolution is the only consistently democratic revolution in respect to such questions as marriage, divorce and the position of children born out of wedlock. And this is a question which most directly affects the interests of more than half the population of any country. Although a large number of bourgeois revolutions preceded it and called themselves democratic, the Bolshevik revolution was the first and only revolution to wage a resolute struggle in this respect both against reaction and feudalism and against the usual hypocrisy of the ruling and propertied classes.

If 92 divorces for every 10,000 marriages seem to Mr. Sorokin a fantastic figure, one can only suppose that either the author lived and was brought up in a monastery so entirely walled off from life that hardly anyone will believe such a monastery ever existed, or that he is distorting the truth in the interest of reaction and the bourgeoisie. Anybody in the least acquainted with social conditions in bourgeois countries knows that the real number of actual divorces (of course, not sanctioned by church and law) is everywhere immeasurably greater. The only difference between Russia and other countries in this respect is that our laws do not sanctify hypocrisy and the debasement of the woman and her child, but openly and in the name of the government declare systematic war on all hypocrisy and all debasement.

The Marxist journal will have to wage war also on these modern "educated" feudalists. Not a few of them, very likely, are in receipt of government money and are employed by our government to educate our youth, although they are no more fitted for this than notorious perverts are fitted for the post of superintendents of educational establishments for the young.

The working class of Russia proved able to win power; but it has not yet learned to utilise it, for otherwise it would have long ago very politely dispatched such teachers and members of learned societies to countries with a bourgeois "democracy". That is the proper place for such feudalists.

But it will learn, given the will to learn.

March 12, 1922

*Pod Znamenem Marksizma* No. 3

March 1922

Signed: *N. Lenin*

*Collected Works*, Vol. 33,  
pp. 227-36

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## **ELEVENTH CONGRESS OF THE R.C.P.(B.)**

**MARCH 27-APRIL 2, 1922**

### **1**

## **POLITICAL REPORT OF THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE OF THE R.C.P.(B.) MARCH 27**

(*Applause*) Comrades permit me to start the political report of the Central Committee from the end and not from the beginning of the year. The political question most discussed today is Genoa.<sup>\*</sup> But since a great deal has already been said on the subject in our press and since I have already said what is most essential to it in my speech on March 6, which has been published, I would ask you to permit me to refrain from going into details unless you particularly wish me to do so.

On the whole you know everything about Genoa, because much has been written about it in the newspapers—in my opinion too much, to the detriment of the real, practical and urgent requirements of our work of construction in general, and of our economic development in particular. In Europe, in all bourgeois countries, of course, they like to occupy people's minds, or stuff their heads, with all sorts of trash about Genoa. On this occasion (I would say not only on this occasion) we are copying them and copying them far too much.

I must say that in the Central Committee we have taken very great pains to appoint a delegation of our best diplomats (we now have a fair number of Soviet diplomats, which was not the case in the early period of the Soviet Republic). The Central Committee has drawn up sufficiently detailed instructions for our diplomats at the Genoa Conference, we spent a long time discussing these instructions and considered and reconsidered them several times. It goes without saying that the question here is, I shall not say of war, because that term is likely to be misunderstood, but at all events one of rivalry. In the bourgeois camp there is a very strong trend, much stronger than any other, that wants to wreck the Genoa Conference. There are trends which

\* See V I Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 33, pp. 212-26.—*Ed*

\* *Ibid* Vol. 12 pp. 390-93 and 410 Vol. 45 pp. 463-64, 506-12. See also this volume pp. 594-95.—*Id*

greatly favour the Genoa Conference and want it to meet at all costs. The latter have now gained the upper hand. Lastly, in all bourgeois countries there are trends which might be called pacifist trends, among which should be included the entire Second and Two-and-a-Half Internationals. It is this section of the bourgeoisie which is advocating a number of pacifist proposals and is trying to concoct something in the nature of a pacifist policy. As Communists we have definite views about this pacifism which it would be superfluous to expound here. Needless to say, we are going to Genoa not as Communists, but as merchants. We must trade, and they must trade. We want the trade to benefit us; they want it to benefit them. The course of the issue will be determined, if only to a small degree, by the skill of our diplomats.

Insofar as we are going to Genoa as merchants it is obviously by no means a matter of indifference to us whether we shall deal with those people from the bourgeois camp who are inclined to settle the problem by war, or with those who are inclined towards pacifism, even the worst kind of pacifism, which from the communist viewpoint will not stand the slightest criticism. It would be a bad merchant, indeed, if he were unable to appreciate this distinction, and, by shaping his tactics accordingly, achieve practical aims.

We are going to Genoa for the practical purpose of expanding trade and of creating the most favourable conditions for its successful development on the widest scale. But we cannot guarantee the success of the Genoa Conference. It would be ridiculous and absurd to give any guarantees on that score. I must say, however, that, weighing up the present possibilities of Genoa in the most sober and cautious manner, I think that it will not be an exaggeration to say that we shall achieve our object.

Through Genoa, if the other parties in the negotiations are sufficiently shrewd and not too stubborn; bypassing Genoa if they take it into their heads to be stubborn. But we shall achieve our goal!

The fact of the matter is that the most urgent, pressing and practical interests that have been sharply revealed in all the capitalist countries during the past few years call for the development, regulation and expansion of trade with Russia. Since such interests exist, we may argue, we may quarrel, we may disagree on specific combinations—it is highly probable that we shall have to disagree—this fundamental economic necessity will, nevertheless, after all is said and done, make a way for itself. I think we can rest assured of that. I cannot vouch for the date; I cannot vouch for success; but at this gathering we can say with a fair amount of certainty that regular trade relations between the Soviet Republic and all the capitalist countries in the world

are certain to continue developing. When I come to it in another part of my report I shall mention the hitches that may possibly occur, but I think that this is all that need be said on the question of Genoa.

Needless to say, the comrades who desire to study the question in greater detail and who are not content with the list of delegates published in the newspapers may set up a commission, or a section, and acquaint themselves with all the material of the Central Committee, and all the correspondence and instructions. Of course, the details we have outlined are provisional, for no one up to now knows exactly who will sit round the table at Genoa, and what terms, or preliminary terms or provisions will be announced. It would be highly inexpedient, and I think practically impossible, to discuss all this here. I repeat, this Congress, through the medium of a section, or a commission, has every opportunity to collect all the documents on this question—both the published documents and those in the possession of the Central Committee.

I shall not say any more, for I am sure that it is not here that our greatest difficulties lie. This is not the question on which the attention of the whole Party should be focussed. The European bourgeois press is artificially and deliberately inflating and exaggerating the importance of this Conference in order to deceive the masses of the working people (as nine-tenths of the bourgeois press in all these free democratic countries and republics always does). We have succumbed to the influence of this press to some extent. As usual, our press still yields to the old bourgeois habits; it refuses to adopt new, socialist methods, and we have made a greater fuss about this subject than it deserves. In fact, for Communists, especially for those who have lived through such stern years as we have lived through since 1917, and witnessed the formidable political combinations that have appeared in that period, Genoa does not present any great difficulties. I cannot recall any disagreement or controversy on this question either in the Central Committee or in the ranks of the Party. This is natural, for there is nothing controversial here from the point of view of Communists, even bearing in mind the various shades of opinion among them. I repeat: we are going to Genoa as merchants for the purpose of securing the most favourable terms for promoting the trade which has started, which is being carried on, and which, even if someone succeeded in forcibly interrupting it for a time, would inevitably continue to develop after the interruption.

Hence, confining myself to these brief remarks about Genoa, I shall now proceed to deal with the issues which, in my opinion, have been the major political questions of the past year and which



will be such in the ensuing year. It seems to me that the political report of the Central Committee should not merely deal with the events of the year under review, but also point out (that, at any rate, is what I usually do) the main, fundamental political lessons of the events of that year, so that we may learn something for the ensuing year and be in a position to correctly determine our policy for that year.

The New Economic Policy is, of course, the major question. This has been the dominant question throughout the year under review. If we have any important, serious and irrevocable gain to record for this year (and I am not so very sure that we have), it is that we have learnt something from the launching of this New Economic Policy. If we have learnt even a little, then, during the past year, we have learnt a great deal in this field. And the test of whether we have really learnt anything, and to what extent, will probably be made by subsequent events of a kind which we ourselves can do little to determine, as for example the impending financial crisis. It seems to me that in connection with the New Economic Policy, the most important things to keep in mind as a basis for all our arguments, as a means of testing our experience during the past year, and of learning practical lessons for the ensuing year are contained in the following three points.

First, the New Economic Policy is important for us primarily as a means of testing whether we are really establishing a link with the peasant economy. In the preceding period of development of our revolution, when all our attention and all our efforts were concentrated mainly on, or almost entirely absorbed by, the task of repelling invasion, we could not devote the necessary attention to this link. We had other things to think about. To some extent we could and had to ignore this bond when we were confronted by the absolutely urgent and overshadowing task of warding off the danger of being immediately crushed by the gigantic forces of world imperialism.

The turn towards the New Economic Policy was decided on at the last Congress with exceptional unanimity, with even greater unanimity than other questions have been decided by our Party (which, it must be admitted, is generally distinguished for its unanimity). This unanimity showed that the need for a new approach to socialist economy had fully matured. People who differed on many questions, and who assessed the situation from different angles, unanimously and very quickly and unhesitatingly agreed that we lacked a real approach to socialist economy, to the task of building its foundation; that the only means of finding this approach was the New Economic Policy. Owing to the course taken by the development of war events, by the development of political events, by the development of capitalism

in the old, civilised West, and owing also to the social and political conditions that developed in the colonies we were the first to make a breach in the old bourgeois world at a time when our country was economically, if not the most backward, at any rate one of the most backward countries in the world. The vast majority of the peasants in our country are engaged in small individual farming. The items of our programme of building a communist society, that we could apply immediately, were to some extent outside the sphere of activity of the broad mass of the peasantry, upon whom we imposed very heavy obligations, which we justified on the grounds that war permitted no wavering in this matter. Taken as a whole this was accepted as justification by the peasantry, notwithstanding the mistakes we could not avoid. On the whole, the mass of the peasantry realised and understood that the enormous burdens imposed upon them were necessary in order to save the workers and peasants' rule from the landowners and prevent it from being strangled by capitalist invasion which threatened to wash away all the gains of the revolution. But there was no link between the peasant economy and the economy that was being built up in the nationalised, socialised factories and on state farms.

We saw this clearly at the last Party Congress. We saw it so clearly that there was no hesitation whatever in the Party on the question as to whether the New Economic Policy was inevitable or not.

It is amusing to read what is said about our decision in the numerous publications of the various Russian parties abroad. There are only trifling differences in the opinions they express. Living with memories of the past they still continue to reiterate that to this day the Left Communists are opposed to the New Economic Policy. In 1921 they remembered what had occurred in 1918 and what our Left Communists themselves have forgotten and they go on chewing this over and over again, assuming the world that these Bolsheviks are a sly and clever lot and that they are concealing from Europe that they have disagreements in their ranks. Reading this one says to oneself: "Let them go on fooling themselves." If this is what they imagine is going on in this country, we can judge the degree of intelligence of these allegedly highly educated old fogies who have fled abroad. We know that there have been no disagreements in our ranks and the reason for this is that the practical necessity of a different approach to the task of building the foundation of socialist economy was clear to all.

There was no link between the peasant economy and the new economy we tried to create. Does it exist now? Not yet. We are only approaching it. The whole significance of the New Economic Policy--which our press still often searches for everywhere ex-

cept where it should search—the whole purpose of this policy is to find a way of establishing a link between the new economy, which we are creating with such enormous effort, and the peasant economy. That is what stands to our credit; without it we would not be communist revolutionaries.

We began to develop the new economy in an entirely new way, brushing aside everything old. Had we not begun to develop it we would have been utterly defeated in the very first months, in the very first years. But the fact that we began to develop this new economy with such splendid audacity does not mean that we must necessarily continue in the same way. Why should we? There is no reason.

From the very beginning we said that we had to undertake an entirely new task, and that unless we received speedy assistance from our comrades, the workers in the capitalistically more developed countries, we should encounter incredible difficulties and certainly make a number of mistakes. The main thing is to be able dispassionately to examine where such mistakes have been made and to start again from the beginning. If we begin from the beginning, not twice, but many times, it will show that we are not bound by prejudice, and that we are approaching our task, which is the greatest the world has ever seen, with a sober outlook.

Today, as far as the New Economic Policy is concerned the main thing is to assimilate the experience of the past year correctly. That must be done, and we want to do it. And if we want to do it, come what may (and we do want to do it, and shall do it!), we must know that the problem of the New Economic Policy, the fundamental, decisive and overriding problem, is to establish a link between the new economy that we have begun to create (very badly, very clumsily, but have nevertheless begun to create, on the basis of an entirely new, socialist economy, of a new system of production and distribution) and the peasant economy, by which millions and millions of peasants obtain their livelihood.

This link has been lacking, and we must create it before anything else. Everything else must be subordinated to this. We have still to ascertain the extent to which the New Economic Policy has succeeded in creating this link without destroying what we have begun so clumsily to build.

We are developing our economy together with the peasantry. We shall have to alter it many times and organise it in such a way that it will provide a link between our socialist work on large-scale industry and agriculture and the work every peasant is doing as best he can, struggling out of poverty, without philosophising (for how can philosophising help him to extricate himself from his position and save him from the very real danger of a painful death from starvation?).

We must reveal this link so that we may see it clearly, so that all the people may see it, and so that the whole mass of the peasantry may see that there is a connection between their present severe, incredibly ruined, incredibly impoverished and painful existence and the work which is being done for the sake of remote socialist ideals. We must bring about a situation where the ordinary, rank-and-file working man realises that he has obtained some improvement, and that he has obtained it not in the way a few peasants obtained improvements under the rule of landowners and capitalists, when every improvement (undoubtedly there were improvements and very big ones) was accompanied by insult, derision and humiliation for the muzhik, by violence against the masses, which not a single peasant has forgotten, and which will not be forgotten in Russia for decades. Our aim is to restore the link, to prove to the peasant by deeds that we are beginning with what is intelligible, familiar and immediately accessible to him, in spite of his poverty and not with something remote and fantastic from the peasant's point of view. We must prove that we can help him and that in this period, when the small peasant is in a state of appalling ruin, impoverishment and starvation, the Communists are really helping him. Either we prove that, or he will send us to the devil. That is absolutely inevitable.

Such is the significance of the New Economic Policy; it is the basis of our entire policy; it is the major lesson taught by the whole of the past year's experience in applying the New Economic Policy, and, so to speak, our main political rule for the coming year. The peasant is allowing us credit, and, of course, after what he has lived through, he cannot do otherwise. Taken in the mass, the peasants go on saying: "Well, if you are not able to do it yet, we shall wait; perhaps you will learn." But this credit cannot go on for ever.

This we must know; and having obtained credit we must hurry. We must know that the time is approaching when this peasant country will no longer give us credit, when it will demand cash, to use a commercial term. It will say: "You have postponed payment for so many months, so many years. But by this time, dear rulers, you must have learnt the most sound and reliable method of helping us free ourselves from poverty, want, starvation and ruin. You can do it, you have proved it." This is the test that we shall inevitably have to face; and, in the last analysis, this test will decide everything: the fate of NEP and the fate of communist rule in Russia.

Shall we accomplish our immediate task or not? Is this NEP fit for anything or not? If the retreat turns out to be correct tactics, we must link up with the peasant masses while we are in

retreat, and subsequently march forward with them a hundred times more slowly, but firmly and unswervingly, in a way that will always make it apparent to them that we are really marching forward. Then our cause will be absolutely invincible, and no power on earth can vanquish us. We did not accomplish this in the first year. We must say this frankly. And I am profoundly convinced (and our New Economic Policy enables us to draw this conclusion quite definitely and firmly) that if we appreciate the enormous danger harboured by NEP and concentrate all our forces on its weak points, we shall solve this problem.

Link up with the peasant masses, with the rank-and-file working peasants, and begin to move forward immeasurably, infinitely more slowly than we expected, but in such a way that the entire mass will actually move forward with us. If we do that we shall in time progress much more quickly than we even dream of to-day. This, in my opinion, is the first fundamental political lesson of the New Economic Policy.

The second, more specific lesson is the test through competition between state and capitalist enterprises. We are now forming mixed companies—I shall have something to say about these later on—which, like our state trade and our New Economic Policy as a whole, mean that we Communists are resorting to commercial, capitalist methods. These mixed companies are also important because through them practical competition is created between capitalist methods and our methods. Consider it practically. Up to now we have been writing a programme and making promises. In its time this was absolutely necessary. It is impossible to launch on a world revolution without a programme and without promises. If the whiteguards, including the Mensheviks, jeer at us for this, it only shows that the Mensheviks and the socialists of the Second and Two-and-a-Half Internationals have no idea, in general, of the way a revolution develops. We could proceed in no other way.

Now, however, the position is that we must put our work to a serious test, and not the sort of test that is made by control institutions set up by the Communists themselves, even though these control institutions are magnificent, even though they are almost the ideal control institutions in the Soviet system and the Party; such a test may be mockery from the point of view of the actual requirements of the peasant economy, but it is certainly no mockery from the standpoint of our construction. We are now setting up these control institutions but I am referring not to this test but to the test from the point of view of the entire economy.

The capitalist was able to supply things. He did it inefficiently, charged exorbitant prices, insulted and robbed us. The ordinary

workers and peasants, who do not argue about communism because they do not know what it is, are well aware of this.

"But the capitalists were, after all, able to supply things—are you? You are not able to do it." That is what we heard last spring; though not always clearly audible, it was the undertone of the whole of last spring's crisis. "As people you are splendid, but you cannot cope with the economic task you have undertaken." This is the simple and withering criticism which the peasantry—and through the peasantry, some sections of workers—levelled at the Communist Party last year. That is why in the NEP question, this old point acquires such significance.

We need a real test. The capitalists are operating alongside us. They are operating like robbers; they make profit; but they know how to do things. But you—you are trying to do it in a new way: you make no profit, your principles are communist, your ideals are splendid; they are written out so beautifully that you seem to be saints, that you should go to heaven while you are still alive. But can you get things done? We need a test, a real test, not the kind the Central Control Commission makes when it censures somebody and the All-Russia Central Executive Committee imposes some penalty. Yes, we want a real test from the viewpoint of the national economy.

We Communists have received numerous deferments, and more credit has been allowed us than any other government has ever been given. Of course, we Communists helped to get rid of the capitalists and landowners. The peasants appreciate this and have given us an extension of time, longer credit, but only for a certain period. After that comes the test: can you run the economy as well as the others? The old capitalist can; you cannot.

That is the first lesson, the first main part of the political report of the Central Committee. We cannot run the economy. This has been proved in the past year. I would like very much to quote the example of several Gos-trests (if I may express myself in the beautiful Russian language that Turgenev praised so highly) to show how we run the economy.

Unfortunately, for a number of reasons, and largely owing to ill health, I have been unable to elaborate this part of my report and so I must confine myself to expressing my conviction, which is based on my observations of what is going on. During the past year we showed quite clearly that we cannot run the economy. That is the fundamental lesson. Either we prove the opposite in the coming year, or Soviet power will not be able to exist. And

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\* An ironical reference to the habit, then emerging, of abbreviating the names of various institutions. Here the abbreviation stands for *state trusts*. —*Ed.*

*the greatest danger is that not everybody realises this. If all of us Communists, the responsible officials, clearly realise that we lack the ability to run the economy, that we must learn from the very beginning, then we shall win—that, in my opinion, is the fundamental conclusion that should be drawn. But many of us do not appreciate this and believe that if there are people who do think that way, it can only be the ignorant, who have not studied communism; perhaps they will some day learn and understand. No, excuse me, the point is not that the peasant or the non-Party worker has not studied communism, but that the time has passed when the job was to draft a programme and call upon the people to carry out this great programme. That time has passed. Today you must prove that you can give practical economic assistance to the workers and to the peasants under the present difficult conditions, and thus demonstrate to them that you have stood the test of competition.*

The mixed companies that we have begun to form, in which private capitalists, Russian and foreign, and Communists participate, provide one of the means by which we can learn to organise competition properly and show that we are no less able to establish a link with the peasant economy than the capitalists; that we can meet its requirements; that we can help the peasant make progress even at his present level, in spite of his backwardness; for it is impossible to change him in a brief span of time.

That is the sort of competition confronting us as an absolutely urgent task. It is the pivot of the New Economic Policy and, in my opinion, the quintessence of the Party's policy. We are faced with any number of purely political problems and difficulties. You know what they are: Genoa, the danger of intervention. The difficulties are enormous but they are nothing compared with this economic difficulty. We know how things are done in the political field: we have gained considerable experience; we have learned a lot about bourgeois diplomacy. It is the sort of thing the Mensheviks taught us for fifteen years, and we got something useful out of it. This is not new.

But here is something we must do now in the economic field. We must win the competition against the ordinary shop assistant, the ordinary capitalist, the merchant, who will go to the peasant without arguing about communism. Just imagine, he will not begin to argue about communism, but will argue in this way—if you want to obtain something, or carry on trade properly, or if you want to build, I will do the building at a high price; the Communists will, perhaps, build at a higher price, perhaps even ten times higher. It is this kind of agitation that is now the crux of the matter; herein lies the root of economics.

I repeat, thanks to our correct policy, the people allowed us

a deferment of payment and credit, and this, to put it in terms of NEP, is a promissory note. But this promissory note is undated, and you cannot learn from the wording when it will be presented for redemption. Therein lies the danger; this is the specific feature that distinguishes these political promissory notes from ordinary, commercial promissory notes. We must concentrate all our attention on this, and not rest content with the fact that there are responsible and good Communists in all the state trusts and mixed companies. That is of no use, because these Communists do not know how to run the economy and, in that respect, are inferior to the ordinary capitalist salesmen, who have received their training in big factories and big firms. But we refuse to admit this; in this field communist conceit—*komchvanstvo*\* to use the great Russian language—still persists. The whole point is that the responsible Communists, even the best of them, who are unquestionably honest and loyal, who in the old days suffered penal servitude and did not fear death, do not know how to trade, because they are not businessmen, they have not learnt to trade, do not want to learn and do not understand that they must start learning from the beginning. Communists, revolutionaries who have accomplished the greatest revolution in the world, on whom the eyes of, if not forty pyramids, then, at all events, forty European countries are turned in the hope of emancipation from capitalism, must learn from ordinary salesmen. But these ordinary salesmen have had ten years' warehouse experience and know the business, whereas the responsible Communists and devoted revolutionaries do not know the business, and do not even realise that they do not know it.

And so, comrades, if we do away with at least this elementary ignorance we shall achieve a tremendous victory. We must leave this Congress with the conviction that we are ignorant of this business and with the resolve to start learning it from the bottom. After all, we have not ceased to be revolutionaries (although many say, and not altogether without foundation, that we have become bureaucrats) and can understand this simple thing, that in a new and unusually difficult undertaking we must be prepared to start from the beginning over and over again. If after starting you find yourselves at a dead end, start again, and go on doing it ten times if necessary, until you attain your object. Do not put on airs, do not be conceited because you are a Communist while there is some non-Party salesman, perhaps a whiteguard—and very likely he is a whiteguard—who can do things which economically must be done at all costs, but which you cannot do. If you responsible Communists, who have hundreds of ranks and

\* Literally, "comconceit".—Ed.



titles and wear communist and Soviet Orders, realise this, you will attain your object, because this is something that can be learned.

We have some successes, even if only very tiny ones, to record for the past year, but they are insignificant. The main thing is that there is no realisation nor widespread conviction among all Communists that at the present time the responsible and most devoted Russian Communist is less able to perform these functions than any salesman of the old school. I repeat, we must start learning from the very beginning. If we realise this, we shall pass our test; and the test is a serious one which the impending financial crisis will set—the test set by the Russian and international market to which we are subordinated, with which we are connected, and from which we cannot isolate ourselves. The test is a crucial one, for here we may be beaten economically and politically.

That is how the question stands and it cannot be otherwise, for the competition will be very severe, and it will be decisive. We had many outlets and loopholes that enabled us to escape from our political and economic difficulties. We can proudly say that up to now we have been able to utilise these outlets and loopholes in various combinations corresponding to the varying circumstances. But now we have no other outlets. Permit me to say this to you without exaggeration, because in this respect it is really “the last and decisive battle”, not against international capitalism—against that we shall yet have many “last and decisive battles”—but against Russian capitalism, against the capitalism that is growing out of the small-peasant economy, the capitalism that is fostered by the latter. Here we shall have a fight on our hands in the immediate future, and the date of it cannot be fixed exactly. Here the “last and decisive battle” is impending; here there are no political or any other flanking movements that we can undertake, because this is a test in competition with private capital. Either we pass this test in competition with private capital, or we fail completely. To help us pass it we have political power and a host of economic and other resources; we have everything you want except ability. We lack ability. And if we learn this simple lesson from the experience of last year and take it as our guiding line for the whole of 1922, we shall conquer this difficulty, too, in spite of the fact that it is much greater than the previous difficulty, for it rests upon ourselves. It is not like some external enemy. The difficulty is that we ourselves refuse to admit the unpleasant truth forced upon us; we refuse to undertake the unpleasant duty that the situation demands of us, namely, to start learning from the beginning. That, in my opinion, is the second lesson that we must learn from the New Economic Policy.

The third, supplementary lesson is on the question of state capitalism. It is a pity Comrade Bukharin is not present at the Congress. I should have liked to argue with him a little, but that had better be postponed to the next Congress. On the question of state capitalism, I think that generally our press and our Party make the mistake of dropping into intellectualism, into liberalism; we philosophise about how state capitalism is to be interpreted, and look into old books. But in those old books you will not find what we are discussing; they deal with the state capitalism that exists under capitalism. Not a single book has been written about state capitalism under communism. It did not occur even to Marx to write a word on this subject; and he died without leaving a single precise statement or definite instruction on it. That is why we must overcome the difficulty entirely by ourselves. And if we make a general mental survey of our press and see what has been written about state capitalism, as I tried to do when I was preparing this report, we shall be convinced that it is missing the target, that it is looking in an entirely wrong direction.

The state capitalism discussed in all books on economics is that which exists under the capitalist system, where the state brings under its direct control certain capitalist enterprises. But ours is a proletarian state; it rests on the proletariat; it gives the proletariat all political privileges; and through the medium of the proletariat it attracts to itself the lower ranks of the peasantry (you remember that we began this work through the Poor Peasants' Committees<sup>262</sup>). That is why very many people are misled by the term state capitalism. To avoid this we must remember the fundamental thing that state capitalism in the form we have here is not dealt with in any theory, or in any books, for the simple reason that all the usual concepts connected with this term are associated with bourgeois rule in capitalist society. Our society is one which has left the rails of capitalism, but has not yet got on to new rails. The state in this society is not ruled by the bourgeoisie, but by the proletariat. We refuse to understand that when we say "state" we mean ourselves, the proletariat, the vanguard of the working class. State capitalism is capitalism which we shall be able to restrain, and the limits of which we shall be able to fix. This state capitalism is connected with the state, and the state is the workers, the advanced section of the workers, the vanguard. We are the state.

State capitalism is capitalism that we must confine within certain bounds; but we have not yet learned to confine it within those bounds. That is the whole point. And it rests with us to determine what this state capitalism is to be. We have sufficient, quite sufficient political power; we also have sufficient economic

*resources at our command, but the vanguard of the working class which has been brought to the forefront to directly supervise, to determine the boundaries, to demarcate, to subordinate and not be subordinated itself, lacks sufficient ability for it. All that is needed here is ability, and that is what we do not have.*

Never before in history has there been a situation in which the proletariat, the revolutionary vanguard, possessed sufficient political power and had state capitalism existing alongside it. The whole question turns on our understanding that this is the capitalism that we can and must permit, that we can and must confine within certain bounds; for this capitalism is essential for the broad masses of the peasantry and for private capital, which must trade in such a way as to satisfy the needs of the peasantry. We must organise things in such a way as to make possible the customary operation of capitalist economy and capitalist exchange, because this is essential for the people. Without it, existence is impossible. All the rest is not an absolutely vital matter to this camp. They can resign themselves to all that. You Communists, you workers, you, the politically enlightened section of the proletariat, which undertook to administer the state, must be able to arrange it so that the state, which you have taken into your hands, shall function the way you want it to. Well, we have lived through a year, the state is in our hands; but has it operated the New Economic Policy in the way we wanted in this past year? No. But we refuse to admit that it did not operate in the way we wanted. How did it operate? The machine refused to obey the hand that guided it. It was like a car that was going not in the direction the driver desired, but in the direction someone else desired; as if it were being driven by some mysterious, lawless hand, God knows whose, perhaps of a profiteer, or of a private capitalist, or of both. Be that as it may, the car is not going quite in the direction the man at the wheel imagines, and often it goes in an altogether different direction. This is the main thing that must be remembered in regard to state capitalism. In this main field we must start learning from the very beginning, and only when we have thoroughly understood and appreciated this can we be sure that we shall learn.

Now I come to the question of halting the retreat, a question I dealt with in my speech at the Congress of Metalworkers. Since then I have not heard any objection, either in the Party press, or in private letters from comrades, or in the Central Committee. The Central Committee approved my plan, which was, that in the report of the Central Committee to the present Congress strong emphasis should be laid on calling a halt to this retreat and that the Congress should give binding instructions

on behalf of the whole Party accordingly.\* For a year we have been retreating. On behalf of the Party we must now call a halt. The purpose pursued by the retreat has been achieved. This period is drawing, or has drawn, to a close. We now have a different objective, that of regrouping our forces. We have reached a new line; on the whole, we have conducted the retreat in fairly good order. True, not a few voices were heard from various sides which tried to convert this retreat into a stampede. Some—for example, several members of the group which bore the name of Workers' Opposition (I don't think they had any right to that name)—argued that we were not retreating properly in some sector or other. Owing to their excessive zeal they found themselves at the wrong door, and now they realise it. At that time they did not see that their activities did not help us to correct our movement, but merely had the effect of spreading panic and hindering our effort to beat a disciplined retreat.

Retreat is a difficult matter, especially for revolutionaries who are accustomed to advance; especially when they have been accustomed to advance with enormous success for several years; especially if they are surrounded by revolutionaries in other countries who are longing for the time when they can launch an offensive. Seeing that we were retreating, several of them burst into tears in a disgraceful and childish manner, as was the case at the last extended Plenary Meeting of the Executive Committee of the Communist International.<sup>263</sup> Moved by the best communist sentiments and communist aspirations, several of the comrades burst into tears because—oh horror!—the good Russian Communists were retreating. Perhaps it is now difficult for me to understand this West-European mentality, although I lived for quite a number of years in those marvellous democratic countries as an exile. Perhaps from their point of view this is such a difficult matter to understand that it is enough to make one weep. We, at any rate, have no time for sentiment. It was clear to us that because we had advanced so successfully for many years and had achieved so many extraordinary victories (and all this in a country that was in an appalling state of ruin and lacked the material resources!), to consolidate that advance, since we had gained so much, it was absolutely essential for us to retreat. We could not hold all the positions we had captured in the first onslaught. On the other hand, it was because we had captured so much in the first onslaught, on the crest of the wave of enthusiasm displayed by the workers and peasants, that we had room enough to retreat a long distance, and can retreat still further now, without losing our main and

\* See V I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 33, pp. 219-26 and 251-53.—Ed.

fundamental positions. On the whole, the retreat was fairly orderly, although certain panic-stricken voices, among them that of the Workers' Opposition (this was the tremendous harm it did!), caused losses in our ranks, caused a relaxation of discipline, and disturbed the proper order of retreat. The most dangerous thing during a retreat is panic. When a whole army (I speak in the figurative sense) is in retreat, it cannot have the same morale as when it is advancing. At every step you find a certain mood of depression. We even had poets who wrote that people were cold and starving in Moscow, that "everything before was bright and beautiful, but now trade and profiteering abound". We have had quite a number of poetic effusions of this sort.

Of course, retreat breeds all this. That is where the serious danger lies; it is terribly difficult to retreat after a great victorious advance, for the relations are entirely different. During a victorious advance, even if discipline is relaxed, everybody presses forward on his own accord. During a retreat, however; discipline must be more conscious and is a hundred times more necessary, because, when the entire army is in retreat, it does not know or see where it should halt. It sees only retreat; under such circumstances a few panic-stricken voices are, at times, enough to cause a stampede. The danger here is enormous. When a real army is in retreat, machine-guns are kept ready, and when an orderly retreat degenerates into a disorderly one, the command to fire is given, and quite rightly, too.

If, during an incredibly difficult retreat, when everything depends on preserving proper order, anyone spreads panic—even from the best of motives—the slightest breach of discipline must be punished severely, sternly, ruthlessly; and this applies not only to certain of our internal Party affairs, but also, and to a greater extent, to such gentry as the Mensheviks, and to all the gentry of the Two-and-a-Half International.

The other day I read an article by Comrade Rakosi in No. 20 of *The Communist International* on a new book by Otto Bauer, from whom at one time we all learned, but who, like Kautsky, became a miserable petty bourgeois<sup>264</sup> after the war. Bauer now writes: "There, they are now retreating to capitalism! We have always said that it was a bourgeois revolution."

And the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries, all of whom preach this sort of thing, are astonished when we declare that we shall shoot people for such things. They are amazed; but surely it is clear. When an army is in retreat a hundred times more discipline is required than when it is advancing, because during an advance everybody presses forward. If everybody started rushing back now, it would spell immediate and inevitable disaster.

The most important thing at such a moment is to retreat in good order, to fix the precise limits of the retreat, and not to give way to panic. And when a Menshevik says, "You are now retreating; I have been advocating retreat all the time, I agree with you, I am your man, let us retreat together," we say in reply, "For the public manifestations of Menshevism our revolutionary courts must pass the death sentence, otherwise they are not our courts, but God knows what."

They cannot understand this and exclaim: "What dictatorial manners these people have!" They still think we are persecuting the Mensheviks because they fought us in Geneva.<sup>265</sup> But had we done that we should have been unable to hold power even for two months. Indeed, the sermons which Otto Bauer, the leaders of the Second and Two-and-a-Half Internationals, the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries preach express their true nature—"The revolution has gone too far. What you are saying now we have been saying all the time, permit us to say it again." But we say in reply: "Permit us to put you before a firing squad for saying that. Either you refrain from expressing your views, or, if you insist on expressing your political views publicly in the present circumstances, when our position is far more difficult than it was when the whiteguards were directly attacking us, then you will have only yourselves to blame if we treat you as the worst and most pernicious whiteguard elements." We must never forget this.

When I speak about halting the retreat I do not mean that we have learned to trade. On the contrary, I am of the opposite opinion; and if my speech were to create that impression it would show that I had been misunderstood and that I am unable to express my thoughts properly.

The point, however, is that we must put a stop to the nervousness and fuss that have arisen with the introduction of NEP—the desire to do everything in a new way and to adapt everything. We now have a number of mixed companies. True, we have only very few. There are nine companies formed in conjunction with foreign capitalists and sanctioned by the Commissariat of Foreign Trade. The Sokolnikov Commission<sup>266</sup> has sanctioned six and the Northern Timber Trust<sup>267</sup> has sanctioned two. Thus we now have seventeen companies with an aggregate capital amounting to many millions, sanctioned by several government departments (of course, there is plenty of confusion with all these departments, so that some slip here is also possible). At any rate, we have formed companies jointly with Russian and foreign capitalists. There are only a few of them. But this small but practical start shows that the Communists have been judged by what they do. They have not been judged by such high institutions

as the Central Control Commission and the All-Russia Central Executive Committee. The Central Control Commission is a splendid institution, of course, and we shall now give it more power. For all that, the judgement these institutions pass on Communists is not—just imagine—recognised on the international market. (*Laughter.*) But now that ordinary Russian and foreign capitalists are joining the Communists in forming mixed companies, we say, "We can do things after all; bad as it is, meagre as it is, we have got something for a start." True, it is not very much. Just think of it: a year has passed since we declared that we would devote all our energy (and it is said that we have a great deal of energy) to this matter, and in this year we have managed to form only seventeen companies.

This shows how devilishly clumsy and inept we are; how much Oblomovism still remains, for which we shall inevitably get a good thrashing. For all that, I repeat, a start, a reconnaissance has been made. The capitalists would not agree to have dealings with us if the elementary conditions for their operations did not exist. Even if only a very small section of them has agreed to this, it shows that we have scored a partial victory.

Of course, they will cheat us in these companies, cheat us so that it will take several years before matters are straightened out. But that does not matter. I do not say that that is a victory: it is a reconnaissance, which shows that we have an arena, we have a terrain, and can now stop the retreat.

The reconnaissance has revealed that we have concluded an insignificant number of agreements with capitalists; but we have concluded them for all that. We must learn from that and continue our operations. In this sense we must put a stop to nervousness, screaming and fuss. We received notes and telephone messages, one after another asking, "Now that we have NEP, may we be reorganised too?" Everybody is bustling, and we get utter confusion; nobody is doing any practical work; everybody is continuously arguing about how to adapt oneself to NEP, but no practical results are forthcoming.

The merchants are laughing at us Communists, and in all probability are saying, "Formerly there were Persuaders-in-Chief,<sup>268</sup> now we have Talkers-in-Chief." That the capitalists gloated over the fact that we started late, that we were not sharp enough—that there need not be the slightest doubt. In this sense, I say, these instructions must be endorsed in the name of the Congress.

The retreat is at an end. The principal methods of operation, of how we are to work with the capitalists, are outlined. We have examples, even if an insignificant number.

Stop philosophising and arguing about NEP. Let the poets write verses, that is what they are poets for. But you economists,

you stop arguing about NEP and get more companies formed; check up on how many Communists we have who can organise successful competition with the capitalists.

The retreat has come to an end; it is now a matter of regrouping our forces. These are the instructions that the Congress must pass so as to put an end to fuss and bustle. Calm down, do not philosophise; if you do, it will be counted as a black mark against you. Show by your practical efforts that you can work no less efficiently than the capitalists. The capitalists create an economic link with the peasants in order to amass wealth; you must create a link with peasant economy in order to strengthen the economic power of our proletarian state. You have the advantage over the capitalists in that political power is in your hands; you have a number of economic weapons at your command; the only trouble is that you cannot make proper use of them. Look at things more soberly. Cast off the tinsel, the festive communist garments, learn a simple thing simply, and we shall beat the private capitalist. We possess political power; we possess a host of economic weapons. If we beat capitalism and create a link with peasant farming we shall become an absolutely invincible power. Then the building of socialism will not be the task of that drop in the ocean, called the Communist Party, but the task of the entire mass of the working people. Then the rank-and-file peasants will see that we are helping them and they will follow our lead. Consequently, even if the pace is a hundred times slower, it will be a million times more certain and more sure.

It is in this sense that we must speak of halting the retreat; and the proper thing to do is, in one way or another, to make this slogan a Congress decision.

In this connection, I should like to deal with the question: what is the Bolsheviks' New Economic Policy—evolution or tactics? This question has been raised by the *Smena Vekh* people,<sup>269</sup> who, as you know, are a trend which has arisen among Russian émigrés; it is a socio-political trend led by some of the most prominent Constitutional-Democrats, several Ministers of the former Kolchak government, people who have come to the conclusion that the Soviet government is building up the Russian state and therefore should be supported. They argue as follows: "What sort of state is the Soviet government building? The Communists say they are building a communist state and assure us that the new policy is a matter of tactics: the Bolsheviks are making use of the private capitalists in a difficult situation, but later they will get the upper hand. The Bolsheviks can say what they like: as a matter of fact it is not tactics but evolution, internal regeneration; they will arrive at the ordi-



nary bourgeois state, and we must support them. History proceeds in devious ways."

Some of them pretend to be Communists; but there are others who are more straightforward, one of these is Ustryalov. I think he was a Minister in Kolchak's government. He does not agree with his colleagues and says: "You can think what you like about communism, but I maintain that it is not a matter of tactics, but of evolution." I think that by being straightforward like this, Ustryalov is rendering us a great service. We, and I particularly, because of my position, hear a lot of sentimental communist lies, "communist fibbing", every day, and sometimes we get sick to death of them. But now instead of these "communist fibs" I get a copy of *Smena Uekkh*, which says quite plainly: "Things are by no means what you imagine them to be. As a matter of fact, you are slipping into the ordinary bourgeois morass with communist flags inscribed with catchwords stuck all over the place." This is very useful. It is not a repetition of what we are constantly hearing around us, but the plain class truth uttered by the class enemy. It is very useful to read this sort of thing; and it was written not because the communist state allows you to write some things and not others, but because it really is the class truth, bluntly and frankly uttered by the class enemy. "I am in favour of supporting the Soviet government," says Ustryalov, although he was a Constitutional-Democrat, a bourgeois, and supported intervention. "I am in favour of supporting Soviet power because it has taken the road that will lead it to the ordinary bourgeois state."

This is very useful, and I think that we must keep it in mind. It is much better for us if the *Smena Uekkh* people write in that strain than if some of them pretend to be almost Communists, so that from a distance one cannot tell whether they believe in God or in the communist revolution. We must say frankly that such candid enemies are useful. We must say frankly that the things Ustryalov speaks about are possible. History knows all sorts of metamorphoses. Relying on firmness of convictions, loyalty, and other splendid moral qualities is anything but a serious attitude in politics. A few people may be endowed with splendid moral qualities, but historical issues are decided by vast masses, which, if the few do not suit them, may at times treat them none too politely.

There have been many cases of this kind; that is why we must welcome this frank utterance of the *Smena Uekkh* people. The enemy is speaking the class truth and is pointing to the danger that confronts us, and which the enemy is striving to make inevitable. *Smena Uekkh* adherents express the sentiments of thousands and tens of thousands of bourgeois, or of Soviet employees

whose function it is to operate our New Economic Policy. This is the real and main danger. And that is why attention must be concentrated mainly on the question: "Who will win?" I have spoken about competition. No direct onslaught is being made on us now; nobody is clutching us by the throat. True, we have yet to see what will happen tomorrow; but today we are not being subjected to armed attack. Nevertheless, the fight against capitalist society has become a hundred times more fierce and perilous, because we are not always able to tell enemies from friends.

When I spoke about communist competition, what I had in mind were not communist sympathies but the development of economic forms and social systems. This is not competition but, if not the last, then nearly the last, desperate, furious, life-and-death struggle between capitalism and communism.

And here we must squarely put the question: Wherein lies our strength and what do we lack? We have quite enough political power. I hardly think there is anyone here who will assert that on such-and-such a practical question, in such-and-such a business institution, the Communists, the Communist Party, lack sufficient power. There are people who think only of this, but these people are hopelessly looking backward and cannot understand that one must look ahead. The main economic power is in our hands. All the vital large enterprises, the railways, etc., are in our hands. The number of leased enterprises, although considerable in places, is on the whole insignificant; altogether it is infinitesimal compared with the rest. The economic power in the hands of the proletarian state of Russia is quite adequate to ensure the transition to communism. What then is lacking? Obviously, what is lacking is culture among the stratum of the Communists who perform administrative functions. If we take Moscow with its 4,700 Communists in responsible positions, and if we take that huge bureaucratic machine, that gigantic heap, we must ask: who is directing whom? I doubt very much whether it can truthfully be said that the Communists are directing that heap. To tell the truth, they are not directing, they are being directed. Something analogous happened here to what we were told in our history lessons when we were children: sometimes one nation conquers another, the nation that conquers is the conqueror and the nation that is vanquished is the conquered nation. This is simple and intelligible to all. But what happens to the culture of these nations? Here things are not so simple. If the conquering nation is more cultured than the vanquished nation, the former imposes its culture upon the latter; but if the opposite is the case, the vanquished nation imposes its culture upon the conqueror. Has not something like this happened in

the capital of the R.S.F.S.R.? Have the 4,700 Communists (nearly a whole army division, and all of them the very best) come under the influence of an alien culture? True, there may be the impression that the vanquished have a high level of culture. But that is not the case at all. Their culture is miserable, insignificant, but it is still at a higher level than ours. Miserable and low as it is, it is higher than that of our responsible Communist administrators, for the latter lack administrative ability. Communists who are put at the head of departments—and sometimes artful saboteurs deliberately put them in these positions in order to use them as a shield—are often fooled. This is a very unpleasant admission to make, or, at any rate, not a very pleasant one; but I think we must admit it, for at present this is the salient problem. I think that this is the political lesson of the past year; and it is around this that the struggle will rage in 1922.

Will the responsible Communists of the R.S.F.S.R. and of the Russian Communist Party realise that they cannot administer; that they only imagine they are directing, but are, actually, being directed? If they realise this they will learn, of course; for this business can be learnt. But one must study hard to learn it, and our people are not doing this. They scatter orders and decrees right and left, but the result is quite different from what they want.

The competition and rivalry that we have placed on the order of the day by proclaiming NEP is a serious business. It appears to be going on in all government offices; but as a matter of fact it is one more form of the struggle between two irreconcilably hostile classes. It is another form of the struggle between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat. It is a struggle that has not yet been brought to a head, and culturally it has not yet been resolved even in the central government departments in Moscow. Very often the bourgeois officials know the business better than our best Communists, who are invested with authority and have every opportunity, but who cannot make the slightest use of their rights and authority.

I should like to quote a passage from a pamphlet by Alexander Todorsky. It was published in Vesjegonsk (there is an uvezd town of that name in Tver Gubernia) on the first anniversary of the Soviet revolution in Russia, on November 7, 1918, a long, long time ago. Evidently this Vesjegonsk comrade is a member of the Party—I read the pamphlet a long time ago and cannot say for certain. He describes how he set to work to equip two Soviet factories, and for this purpose enlisted the services of two bourgeois. He did this in the way these things were done at that time—threatened to imprison them and to confiscate all their property. They were enlisted for the task

of restoring the factories. We know how the services of the bourgeoisie were enlisted in 1918 (*laughter*); so there is no need for me to go into details. The methods we are now using to enlist the bourgeoisie are different. But here is the conclusion he arrived at: "This is only half the job. It is not enough to defeat the bourgeoisie, to overpower them; they must be compelled to work for us."

Now these are remarkable words. They are remarkable for they show that even in the town of Vesyegonsk, even in 1918, there were people who had a correct understanding of the relationship between the victorious proletariat and the vanquished bourgeoisie.

When we rap the exploiters' knuckles, render them innocuous, overpower them, it is only half the job. In Moscow, however, ninety out of a hundred responsible officials imagine that all we have to do is to overpower, render innocuous and rap knuckles. What I have said about the Mensheviks, Socialist-Revolutionaries and whiteguards is very often interpreted solely as rendering innocuous, rapping knuckles (and, perhaps, not only the knuckles, but some other place) and overpowering. But that is only half the job. It was only half the job even in 1918, when this was written by the Vesyegonsk comrade; now it is even less than one-fourth. We must make these hands work for us, and not have responsible Communists at the head of departments, enjoying rank and title, but actually swimming with the stream together with the bourgeoisie. That is the whole point.

The idea of building communist society exclusively with the hands of the Communists is childish, absolutely childish. We Communists are but a drop in the ocean, a drop in the ocean of the people. We shall be able to lead the people along the road we have chosen only if we correctly determine it not only from the standpoint of its direction in world history. From that point of view we have determined the road quite correctly, and this is corroborated by the situation in every country. We must also determine it correctly for our own native land, for our country. But the direction in world history is not the only factor. Other factors are whether there will be intervention or not, and whether we shall be able to supply the peasants with goods in exchange for their grain. The peasants will say: "You are splendid fellows; you defended our country. That is why we obeyed you. But if you cannot run the show, get out!" Yes, that is what the peasants will say.

We Communists shall be able to direct our economy if we succeed in utilising the hands of the bourgeoisie in building up this economy of ours and in the meantime learn from these bourgeoisie and guide them along the road we want them to

travel. But when a Communist imagines that he knows everything, when he says: "I am a responsible Communist, I have beaten enemies far more formidable than any salesman. We have fought at the front and have beaten far more formidable enemies"—it is this prevailing mood that is doing us great harm.

Rendering the exploiters innocuous, rapping them over the knuckles, clipping their wings is the least important part of the job. That must be done; and our State Political Administration and our courts must do it more vigorously than they have up to now. They must remember that they are proletarian courts surrounded by enemies the world over. This is not difficult; and in the main we have learned to do it. Here a certain amount of pressure must be exercised; but that is easy.

To win the second part of the victory, i.e., to build communism with the hands of non-Communists, to acquire the practical ability to do what is economically necessary, we must establish a link with peasant farming; we must satisfy the peasant, so that he will say: "Hard, bitter and painful as starvation is, I see a government that is an unusual one, is no ordinary one, but is doing something practically useful, something tangible." We must see to it that the numerous elements with whom we are co-operating, and who far exceed us in number, work in such a way as to enable us to supervise them; we must learn to understand this work, and direct their hands so that they do something useful for communism. This is the key point of the present situation; for although individual Communists have understood and realised that it is necessary to enlist the non-Party people for this work, the rank-and-file of our Party have not. Many circulars have been written, much has been said about this, but has anything been accomplished during the past year? Nothing. Not five Party committees out of a hundred can show practical results. This shows how much we lag behind the requirements of the present time; how much we are still living in the traditions of 1918 and 1919. Those were great years; a great historical task was then accomplished. But if we only look back on those years and do not see the task that now confronts us, we shall be doomed, certainly and absolutely. And the whole point is that we refuse to admit it.

I should now like to give two practical examples to illustrate how we administer. I have said already that it would be more correct to take one of the state trusts as an example, but I must ask you to excuse me for not being able to apply this proper method, for to do so it would have been necessary to study the concrete material concerning at least one state trust. Unfortunately, I have been unable to do that, and so I will take two small

examples. One example is the accusation of bureaucracy levelled at the People's Commissariat of Foreign Trade by the Moscow Consumers' Co-operative Society. The other example I will take from the Donets Basin.

The first example is not quite relevant—I am unable to find a better—but it will serve to illustrate my main point. As you know from the newspapers, I have been unable to deal with affairs directly during these past few months. I have not been attending the Council of People's Commissars, or the Central Committee. During the short and rare visits I made to Moscow I was struck by the desperate and terrible complaints levelled at the People's Commissariat of Foreign Trade. I have never doubted for a moment that the People's Commissariat of Foreign Trade functions badly and that it is tied up with red tape. But when the complaints became particularly bitter I tried to investigate the matter, to take a concrete example and for once get to the bottom of it; to ascertain the cause, to ascertain why the machine was not working properly.

The M.C.C.S. wanted to purchase a quantity of canned goods. A French citizen appeared and offered some. I do not know whether he did it in the interests of the international policy and with the knowledge of the leadership of the Entente countries, or with the approval of Poincaré and the other enemies of the Soviet government (I think our historians will investigate and make this clear after the Genoa Conference), but the fact is that the French bourgeoisie took not only a theoretical, but also a practical interest in this business, as a French bourgeois turned up in Moscow with an offer of canned goods. Moscow is starving; in the summer the situation will be worse; no meat has been delivered, and knowing the merits of our People's Commissariat of Railways, probably none will be delivered.

An offer is made to sell canned meat for Soviet currency (whether the meat is entirely bad or not will be established by a future investigation). What could be simpler? But if the matter is approached in the Soviet way, it turns out to be not so simple after all. I was unable to go into the matter personally, but I ordered an investigation and I have before me the report which shows how this celebrated case developed. It started with the decision adopted on February 11 by the Political Bureau of the Central Committee of the Russian Communist Party on the report of Comrade Kamenev concerning the desirability of purchasing food abroad. Of course, how could a Russian citizen decide such a question without the consent of the Political Bureau of the Central Committee of the Russian Communist Party! Think of it! How could 4,700 responsible officials (and this is only according to the census<sup>270</sup>) decide a matter like purchasing food

abroad without the consent of the Political Bureau of the Central Committee? This would be something supernatural, of course. Evidently, Comrade Kamenev understands our policy and the realities of our position perfectly well, and therefore, he did not place too much reliance on the numerous responsible officials. He started by taking the bull by the horns—if not the bull, at all events the Political Bureau—and without any difficulty (I did not hear that there was any discussion over the matter) obtained a resolution stating: "To call the attention of the People's Commissariat of Foreign Trade to the desirability of importing food from abroad; the import duties. . .", etc. The attention of the People's Commissariat of Foreign Trade was drawn to this. Things started moving. This was on February 11. I remember that I had occasion to be in Moscow at the very end of February, or about that time, and what did I find? The complaints, the despairing complaints of the Moscow comrades. "What's the matter?" I ask. "There is no way we can buy these provisions." "Why?" "Because of the red tape of the People's Commissariat of Foreign Trade." I had not been taking part in affairs for a long time and I did not know that the Political Bureau had adopted a decision on the matter. I merely ordered the Executive Secretary of our Council to investigate, procure the relevant documents and show them to me. The matter was settled when Krasin arrived. Kamenev discussed the matter with him; the transaction was arranged, and the canned meat was purchased. All's well that ends well.

I have not the least doubt that Kamenev and Krasin can come to an understanding and correctly determine the political line desired by the Political Bureau of the Central Committee of the Russian Communist Party. If the political line on commercial matters were decided by Kamenev and Krasin, ours would be the best Soviet Republic in the world. But Kamenev, a member of the Political Bureau, and Krasin—the latter is busy with diplomatic affairs connected with Genoa, affairs which have entailed an enormous, an excessive amount of labour—cannot be dragged into every transaction, dragged into the business of buying canned goods from a French citizen. That is not the way to work. This is not new, not economic, and not a policy, but sheer mockery. Now I have the report of the investigation into this matter. In fact, I have two reports: one, the report of the investigation made by Gorbunov, the Executive Secretary of the Council of People's Commissars, and his assistant, Miroshnikov; and the other, the report of the investigation made by the State Political Administration. I do not know why the latter interested itself in the matter, and I am not quite sure whether it was proper for it to do so: but I will not go into that now,

because I am afraid this might entail another investigation. The important thing is that material on the matter has been collected and I now have it before me.

On arriving in Moscow at the end of February I heard bitter complaints, "We cannot buy the canned goods", although in Libau there was a ship with a cargo of canned goods, and the owners were prepared to take Soviet currency for real canned goods! (*Laughter.*) If these canned goods are not entirely bad (and I now emphasise the "if", because I am not sure that I shall not call for another investigation, the results of which, however, we shall have to report at the next Congress), if, I say, these goods are not entirely bad and they have been purchased, I ask: why could not this matter have been settled without Kamenev and Krasin? From the report I have before me I gather that one responsible Communist sent another responsible Communist to the devil. I also gather from this report that one responsible Communist said to another responsible Communist "From now on I shall not talk to you except in the presence of a lawyer." Reading this report I recalled the time when I was in exile in Siberia, twenty-five years ago, and had occasion to act in the capacity of a lawyer. I was not a certified lawyer, because, being summarily exiled, I was not allowed to practise; but as there was no other lawyer in the region, people came and confided their troubles to me. But sometimes I had the greatest difficulty in understanding what the trouble was. A woman would come and, of course, start telling me a long story about her relatives, and it was incredibly difficult to get from her what she really wanted. I said to her: "Bring me a copy." She went on with her endless and pointless story. When I repeated, "Bring me a copy", she left, complaining: "He won't hear what I have to say unless I bring a copy." In our colony we had a hearty laugh over this copy. I was able, however, to make some progress. People came to me, brought copies of the necessary documents, and I was able to gather what their trouble was, what they complained of, what ailed them. This was twenty-five years ago, in Siberia, in a place many hundreds of versts from the nearest railway station.

But why was it necessary, three years after the revolution, in the capital of the Soviet Republic, to have two investigations, the intervention of Kamenev and Krasin and the instructions of the Political Bureau to purchase canned goods? What was lacking? Political power? No. The money was forthcoming, so they had economic as well as political power. All the necessary institutions were available. What was lacking, then? Culture. Ninety-nine out of every hundred officials of the M C C S—against whom I have no complaint to make whatever, and whom I regard as excellent Communists—and of the Commissariat of



*Foreign Trade lack culture. They were unable to approach the matter in a cultured manner.*

When I first heard of the matter I sent the following written proposal to the Central Committee: "All the officials concerned of the Moscow government departments—except the members of the All-Russia Central Executive Committee, who, as you know, enjoy immunity—should be put in the worst prison in Moscow for six hours, and those of the People's Commissariat of Foreign Trade for thirty-six hours."\* And then it turned out that no one could say who the culprits were (*laughter*), and from what I have told you it is evident that the culprits will never be discovered. It is simply the usual inability of the Russian intellectuals to get things done—inefficiency and slovenliness. First they rush at a job, do a little bit, and then think about it, and when nothing comes of it, they run to complain to Kamenev and want the matter to be brought before the Political Bureau. Of course, all difficult state problems should be brought before the Political Bureau—I shall have to say something about that later on—but one should think first and then act. If you want to bring up a case, submit the appropriate documents. First send a telegram, and in Moscow we also have telephones; send a telephone message to the competent department and a copy to Tsyurupa saying: "I regard the transaction as urgent and will take proceedings against anyone guilty of red tape." One must think of this elementary culture, one must approach things in a thoughtful manner. If the business is not settled in the course of a few minutes, by telephone, collect the documents and say: "If you start any of your red tape I shall have you clapped in gaol." But not a moment's thought is given to the matter, there is no preparation, the usual bustle, several commissions, everybody is tired out, exhausted, run down, and things begin to move only when Kamenev is put in touch with Krasin. All this is typical of what goes on not only in the capital, Moscow, but also in the other capitals, in the capitals of all independent republics and regions. And the same thing, even a hundred times worse, constantly goes on in the provincial towns.

In our struggle we must remember that Communists must be able to reason. They may be perfectly familiar with the revolutionary struggle and with the state of the revolutionary movement all over the world; but if we are to extricate ourselves from desperate poverty and want we need culture, integrity and an ability to reason. Many lack these qualities. It would be unfair to say that the responsible Communists do not fulfil their functions conscientiously. The overwhelming majority of them,

\* See V I Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 45, p. 498.—Ed.

ninety-nine out of a hundred, are not only conscientious—they proved their devotion to the revolution under the most difficult conditions before the fall of tsarism and after the revolution; they were ready to lay down their lives. Therefore, it would be radically wrong to attribute the trouble to lack of conscientiousness. We need a cultured approach to the simplest affairs of state. We must all understand that this is a matter of state, a business matter; and if obstacles arise we must be able to overcome them and take proceedings against those who are guilty of red tape. We have proletarian courts in Moscow; they must bring to account the persons who are to blame for the failure to effect the purchase of several tens of thousands of poods of canned food. I think the proletarian courts will be able to punish the guilty; but in order to punish, the culprits must be found. I assure you that in this case no culprits will be found. I want you all to look into this business: no one is guilty; all we see is a lot of fuss and bustle and nonsense. Nobody has the ability to approach the business properly; nobody understands that affairs of state must not be tackled in this way. And all the whiteguards and saboteurs take advantage of this. At one time we waged a fierce struggle against the saboteurs; that struggle confronts us even now. There are saboteurs today, of course, and they must be fought. But can we fight them when the position is as I have just described it? This is worse than any sabotage. The saboteur could wish for nothing better than that two Communists should argue over the question of when to appeal to the Political Bureau for instructions on principles in buying food; and of course he would soon slip in between them and egg them on. If any intelligent saboteur were to stand behind these Communists, or behind each of them in turn, and encourage them, that would be the end. The matter would be doomed for ever. Who is to blame? Nobody, because two responsible Communists, devoted revolutionaries, are arguing over last year's snow; are arguing over the question of when to appeal to the Political Bureau for instructions on principles in buying food.

That is how the matter stands and that is the difficulty that confronts us. Any salesman trained in a large capitalist enterprise knows how to settle a matter like that, but ninety-nine responsible Communists out of a hundred do not. And they refuse to understand that they do not know how and that they must learn the ABC of this business. Unless we realise this, unless we sit down in the preparatory class again, we shall never be able to solve the economic problem that now lies at the basis of our entire policy.

The other example I wanted to give you is that of the Donets basin. You know that this is the centre, the real basis of our entire economy. It will be utterly impossible to restore large-

scale industry in Russia, to really build socialism—for it can only be built on the basis of large-scale industry—unless we restore the Donets Basin and bring it up to the proper level. The Central Committee is closely watching developments there.

As regards this region there was no unjustified, ridiculous or absurd raising of minor questions in the Political Bureau; real, absolutely urgent business was discussed.

The Central Committee ought to see to it that in such real centres, bases and foundations of our entire economy, work is carried on in a real business-like manner. At the head of the Central Coal Industry Board we had not only undoubtedly devoted, but really educated and very capable people. I should not be wrong even if I said talented people. That is why the Central Committee has concentrated its attention on it. The Ukraine is an independent republic. That is quite all right. But in Party matters it sometimes—what is the politest way of saying it?—takes a roundabout course, and we shall have to get at them. For the people in charge there are sly, and their Central Committee I shall not say deceives us, but somehow edges away from us. To obtain a general view of the whole business, we discussed it in the Central Committee here and discovered that friction and disagreement exist. There is a Commission for the Utilisation of Small Mines there and, of course, severe friction between it and the Central Coal Industry Board. Still we, the Central Committee, have a certain amount of experience and we unanimously decided not to remove the leading people, but if there was any friction it was to be reported to us, down to the smallest detail. For since we have not only devoted but capable people in the region, we must back them up, and enable them to complete their training, assuming that they have not done so. In the end, a Party Congress was held in the Ukraine—I do not know what happened there; all sorts of things happened. I asked for information from the Ukrainian comrades, and I asked Comrade Orjonikidze particularly—and the Central Committee did the same—to go down there and ascertain what had happened. Evidently, there was some intrigue and an awful mess, which the Commission on Party History<sup>271</sup> would not be able to clear up in ten years should it undertake to do so. But the upshot of it all was that contrary to the unanimous instructions of the Central Committee, this group was superseded by another group. What was the matter? In the main, notwithstanding all its good qualities, a section of the group made a mistake. They were overzealous in their methods of administration.<sup>272</sup> There we have to deal with workers. Very often the word “workers” is taken to mean the factory proletariat. But it does not mean that at all. During the war people who were by no means proletarians went into the factories; they went into

the factories to dodge the war. Are the social and economic conditions in our country today such as to induce real proletarians to go into the factories? No. It would be true according to Marx; but Marx did not write about Russia; he wrote about capitalism as a whole, beginning with the fifteenth century. It held true over a period of six hundred years, but it is not true for present-day Russia. Very often those who go into the factories are not proletarians; they are casual elements of every description.

The task is to learn to organise the work properly, not to lag behind, to remove friction in time, not to separate administration from politics. For our administration and our politics rest on the ability of the entire vanguard to maintain contact with the entire mass of the proletariat and with the entire mass of the peasantry. If anybody forgets these things and becomes wholly absorbed in administration, the result will be a disastrous one. The mistake the Donets Basin officials made is insignificant compared with other mistakes of ours, but this example is a typical one. The Central Committee unanimously ordered: "Allow this group to remain, bring all conflicts, even minor ones, before the Central Committee, for the Donets Basin is not an ordinary district, but a vital one, without which socialist construction would simply remain a pious wish." But all our political power, all the authority of the Central Committee proved of no avail.

This time there was a mistake in administration, of course; in addition, a host of other mistakes were made.

This instance shows that it is not a matter of possessing political power, but of administrative ability, the ability to put the right man in the right place, the ability to avoid petty conflicts, so that state economic work may be carried on without interruption. This is what we lack; this is the root of the mistake.

I think that in discussing our revolution and weighing up its prospects, we must carefully single out the problems which the revolution has solved completely and which have irrevocably gone down in history as an epoch-making departure from capitalism. Our revolution has such solutions to its credit. Let the Mensheviks and Otto Bauer of the Two-and-a-Half International shout "Theirs is a bourgeois revolution." We say that our task was to consummate the bourgeois revolution. As a certain white-guard newspaper expressed it: "Dun, had accumulated in our state institutions for four hundred years; but we cleaned it all out in four years. This is the great service we rendered. What have the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries done? Nothing. The dung of medievalism was not cleaned out in our country, any more than it has been even in advanced, enlightened Germany. Yet they reproach us for doing what stands very much to our credit. The

fact that we have consummated the revolution is an achievement that can never be expunged from our record.

War is now in the air. The trade unions, for example, the reformist trade unions, are passing resolutions against war and are threatening to call strikes in opposition to war. Recently, if I am not mistaken, I read a report in the newspapers to the effect that a certain very good Communist delivered an anti-war speech in the French Chamber of Deputies in the course of which he stated that the workers would prefer to rise in revolt rather than go to war.<sup>273</sup> This question cannot be formulated in the way we formulated it in 1912, when the Basle Manifesto was issued. The Russian revolution alone has shown how it is possible to emerge from war, and what effort this entails. It showed what emerging from a reactionary war by revolutionary methods means. Reactionary imperialist wars are inevitable in all parts of the world; and in solving problems of this sort mankind cannot and will not forget that tens of millions were slaughtered then, and will be slaughtered again if war breaks out. We are living in the twentieth century, and the only nation that emerged from a reactionary war by revolutionary methods not for the benefit of a particular government, but by overthrowing it, was the Russian nation, and it was the Russian revolution that extricated it. What has been won by the Russian revolution is irrevocable. No power on earth can erase that; nor can any power on earth erase the fact that the Soviet state has been created. This is a historic victory. For hundreds of years states have been built according to the bourgeois model, and for the first time a non-bourgeois form of state has been discovered. Our machinery of government may be faulty, but it is said that the first steam engine that was invented was also faulty. No one even knows whether it worked or not, but that is not the important point, the important point is that it was invented. Even assuming that the first steam engine was of no use, the fact is that we now have steam engines. Even if our machinery of government is very faulty, the fact remains that it has been created; the greatest invention in history has been made; a proletarian type of state has been created. Therefore, let all Europe, let thousands of bourgeois newspapers broadcast news about the horrors and poverty that prevail in our country, about suffering being the sole lot of the working people in our country: the workers all over the world are still drawn towards the Soviet state. These are the great and irrevocable gains that we have achieved. But for us, members of the Communist Party, this meant only opening the door. We are now confronted with the task of laying the foundations of socialist economy. Has this been done? No, it has not. We still lack the socialist foundation. Those Communists who imagine that we have it are greatly

mistaken. The whole point is to distinguish firmly, clearly and dispassionately what constitutes the historic service rendered by the Russian revolution from what we do very badly, from what has not yet been created, and what we shall have to re-do many times yet.

Political events are always very confused and complicated. They can be compared with a chain. To hold the whole chain you must grasp the main link. Not a link chosen at random. What was the central event in 1917? Withdrawal from the war. The entire nation demanded this, and it overshadowed everything. Revolutionary Russia accomplished this withdrawal from the war. It cost tremendous effort; but the major demand of the people was satisfied, and that brought us victory for many years. The people realised, the peasants saw, every soldier returning from the front understood perfectly well that the Soviet government was a more democratic government, one that stood closer to the working people. No matter how many outrageous and absurd things we may have done in other spheres, the fact that we realised what the main task was proved that everything was right.

What was the key feature of 1919 and 1920? Military resistance. The all-powerful Entente was marching against us, was at our throats. No propaganda was required there. Every non-Party peasant understood what was going on. The landowners were coming back. The Communists knew how to fight them. That is why, taken in the mass, the peasants followed the lead of the Communists; that is why we were victorious.

In 1921, the key feature was an orderly retreat. This required stern discipline. The Workers' Opposition said: "You are underrating the workers; the workers should display greater initiative." But initiative had to be displayed then by retreating in good order and by maintaining strict discipline. Anyone who introduced an undertone of panic or insubordination would have doomed the revolution to defeat; for there is nothing more difficult than retreating with people who have been accustomed to victory, who are imbued with revolutionary views and ideals, and who, in their hearts, regard every retreat as a disgraceful matter. The greatest danger was the violation of good order, and the greatest task was to maintain good order.

And what is the key feature now? The key feature now—and I would like to sum up my report with this—is not that we have changed our line of policy. An incredible lot of nonsense is being talked about this in connection with NEP. It is all hot air, pernicious twaddle. In connection with NEP some people are beginning to fuss around, proposing to reorganise our government departments and to form new ones. All this is pernicious twaddle.

In the present situation the key feature is people, the proper choice of people. A revolutionary who is accustomed to struggle against petty reformists and uplift educators finds it hard to understand this. Soberly weighed up, the political conclusion to be drawn from the present situation is that we have advanced so far that we cannot hold all the positions; and we need not hold them all.

Internationally our position has improved vastly these last few years. The Soviet type of state is our achievement; it is a step forward in human progress; and the information the Communist International receives from every country every day corroborates this. Nobody has the slightest doubt about that. From the point of view of practical work, however, the position is that unless the Communists render the masses of the peasants practical assistance they will lose their support. Passing laws, passing better decrees, etc., is not now the main object of our attention. There was a time when the passing of decrees was a form of propaganda. People used to laugh at us and say that the Bolsheviks do not realise that their decrees are not being carried out; the entire whiteguard press was full of jeers on that score. But at that period this passing of decrees was quite justified. We Bolsheviks had just taken power, and we said to the peasant, to the worker: "Here is a decree; this is how we would like to have the state administered. Try it!" From the very outset we gave the ordinary workers and peasants an idea of our policy in the form of decrees. The result was the enormous confidence we enjoyed and now enjoy among the masses of the people. This was an essential period at the beginning of the revolution; without it we should not have risen on the crest of the revolutionary wave; we should have wallowed in its trough. Without it we should not have won the confidence of all the workers and peasants who wanted to build their lives on new lines. But this period has passed, and we refuse to understand this. Now the peasants and workers will laugh at us if we order this or that government department to be formed or reorganised. The ordinary workers and peasants will display no interest in this now, and they will be right, because this is not the central task today. This is not the sort of thing with which we Communists should now go to the people. Although we who are engaged in government departments are always overwhelmed with so many petty affairs, this is not the link that we must grasp, this is not the key feature. The key feature is that we have not got the right men in the right places; that responsible Communists who acquitted themselves magnificently during the revolution have been given commercial and industrial functions about which they know nothing; and they prevent us from seeing the truth, for rogues and rascals hide magnificently behind their

backs. The trouble is that we have no such thing as practical control of how things have been done. This is a prosaic job, a small job; these are petty affairs. But after the greatest political change in history, bearing in mind that for a time we shall have to live in the midst of the capitalist system, the key feature now is not politics in the narrow sense of the word (what we read in the newspapers is just political fireworks; there is nothing socialist in it at all), the key feature is not resolutions, not departments and not reorganisation. As long as these things are necessary we shall do them, but don't go to the people with them. Choose the proper men and introduce practical control. That is what the people will appreciate.

In the sea of people we are after all but a drop in the ocean, and we can administer only when we express correctly what the people are conscious of. Unless we do this the Communist Party will not lead the proletariat, the proletariat will not lead the masses, and the whole machine will collapse. The chief thing the people, all the working people, want today is nothing but help in their desperate hunger and need, they want to be shown that the improvement needed by the peasants is really taking place in the form they are accustomed to. The peasant knows and is accustomed to the market and trade. We were unable to introduce direct communist distribution. We lacked the factories and their equipment for this. That being the case, we must provide the peasants with what they need through the medium of trade, and provide it as well as the capitalist did, otherwise the people will not tolerate such an administration. This is the key to the situation and unless something unexpected arises, this, given three conditions, should be the central feature of our activities in 1922.

The first condition is that there shall be no intervention. We are doing all we can in the diplomatic field to avoid it, nevertheless, it may occur any day. We must really be on the alert, and we must agree to make certain big sacrifices for the sake of the Red Army, within definite limits, of course. We are confronted by the entire bourgeois world, which is only seeking a way in which to strangle us. Our Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries are nothing more nor less than the agents of this bourgeoisie. Such is their political status.

The second condition is that the financial crisis shall not be too severe. The crisis is approaching. You will hear about that when we discuss financial policy. If it is too severe and rigorous we shall have to revise many things again and concentrate all efforts on one thing. If it is not too severe it may even be useful; it will give the Communists in all the state trusts a good shaking; only we must not forget to do it. The financial crisis will shake



up government departments and industrial enterprises, and those that are not equal to their task will be the first to burst; only we must take care that all the blame for this is not thrown on the specialists while the responsible Communists are praised for being very good fellows who have fought at the fronts and have always worked well. Thus, if the financial crisis is not too severe we can derive some benefit from it and comb the ranks of the responsible Communists engaged in the business departments not in the way the Central Control Commission and the Central Verification Commission<sup>274</sup> comb them, but very thoroughly.

The third condition is that we shall make no political mistakes in this period. Of course, if we do make political mistakes all our work of economic construction will be disrupted and we shall land ourselves in controversies about how to rectify them and what direction to pursue. But if we make no sad mistakes, the key feature in the near future will be not decrees and politics in the narrow sense of the word, not departments and their organisation—the responsible Communists and the Soviet institutions will deal with these things whenever necessary—the main thing in all our activities will be choosing the right people and making sure that decisions are carried out. If, in this respect, we learn something practical, if we do something practically useful, we shall again overcome all difficulties.

In conclusion I must mention the practical side of the question of our Soviet institutions, the higher government bodies and the Party's relation to them. The relations between the Party and the Soviet government bodies are not what they ought to be. On this point we are quite unanimous. I have given one example of how minor matters are dragged before the Political Bureau. It is extremely difficult to get out of this by formal means, for there is only one governing party in our country; and a member of the Party cannot be prohibited from lodging complaints. That is why everything that comes up on the Council of People's Commissars is dragged before the Political Bureau. I, too, am greatly to blame for this, for to a large extent contact between the Council of People's Commissars and the Political Bureau was maintained through me. When I was obliged to retire from work it was found that the two wheels were not working in unison and Kamenev had to bear a treble load to maintain this contact. Inasmuch as it is barely probable that I shall return to work in the near future, all hope devolves on the fact that there are two other deputies—Comrade Tsyurupa, who has been cleansed by the Germans, and Comrade Rykov, whom they have splendidly cleansed. It seems that even Wilhelm, the German Emperor, has stood us in good stead—I never expected it. He had a surgeon, who happened to be the doctor treating Comrade Rykov, and

he removed his worst part, keeping it in Germany, and left the best part intact, sending that part of Comrade Rykov thoroughly cleansed to us. If that method continues to be used it will be a really good thing.

Joking aside, a word or two about the main instructions. On this point there is complete unanimity on the Central Committee, and I hope that the Congress will pay the closest attention to it and endorse the instructions that the Political Bureau and the Central Committee be relieved of minor matters, and that more should be shifted to the responsible officials. The People's Commissars must be responsible for their work and should not bring these matters up first on the Council of People's Commissars and then on the Political Bureau. Formally, we cannot abolish the right to lodge complaints with the Central Committee, for our Party is the only governing party in the country. But we must put a stop to the habit of bringing every petty matter before the Central Committee; we must raise the prestige of the Council of People's Commissars. The Commissars and not the Deputy Commissars must mainly attend the meetings of the Council. The functions of the Council must be changed in the direction in which I have not succeeded in changing them during the past year, that is, it must pay much more attention to executive control. We shall have two more deputies—Rykov and Tsyurupa. When Rykov was in the Extraordinary Authorised Council of Workers' and Peasants' Defence for the Supply of the Red Army and Navy<sup>275</sup> he tightened things up and the work went well. Tsyurupa organised one of the most efficient People's Commissariats. If together they make the maximum effort to improve the People's Commissariats in the sense of efficiency and responsibility, we shall make some, even if a little, progress here. We have eighteen People's Commissariats of which not less than fifteen are of no use at all—efficient People's Commissars cannot be found everywhere, and I certainly hope that people give this more of their attention. Comrade Rykov must be a member of the Central Committee Bureau and of the Presidium of the All-Russia Central Executive Committee because there must be a tie-up between these two bodies, for without this tie-up the main wheels sometimes spin in the air.

In this connection, we must see to it that the number of commissions of the Council of People's Commissars and of the Council of Labour and Defence is reduced. These bodies must know and settle their own affairs and not split up into an infinite number of commissions. A few days ago the commissions were overhauled. It was found that there were one hundred and twenty of them. How many were necessary? Sixteen. And this is not the first cut. Instead of accepting responsibility for their work,

preparing a decision for the Council of People's Commissars and knowing that they bear responsibility for this decision, there is a tendency to take shelter behind commissions. The devil himself would lose his way in this maze of commissions. Nobody knows what is going on, who is responsible: everything is mixed up, and finally a decision is passed for which everybody is held responsible.

In this connection, reference must be made to the need for extending and developing the autonomy and activities of the regional economic conferences. The administrative division of Russia has now been drawn up on scientific lines; the economic and climatic conditions, the way of life, the conditions of obtaining fuel, of local industry, etc., have all been taken into account. On the basis of this division, district and regional economic conferences have been instituted. Changes may be made here and there, of course, but the prestige of these economic conferences must be enhanced.

Then we must see to it that the All-Russia Central Executive Committee works more energetically, meets in session more regularly, and for longer periods. The sessions of the All-Russia Central Executive Committee should discuss bills which sometimes are hastily brought before the Council of People's Commissars when there is no need to do so. It would be better to postpone such bills and give the local workers an opportunity to study them carefully. Stricter demands should be made upon those who draft the bills. This is not done.

If the sessions of the All-Russia Central Executive Committee last longer, they can split up into sections and subcommissions, and thus will be able to verify the work more strictly and strive to achieve what in my opinion is the key, the quintessence of the present political situation: to concentrate attention on choosing the right people and on verifying how decisions are carried out.

It must be admitted, and we must not be afraid to admit, that in ninety-nine cases out of a hundred the responsible Communists are not in the jobs they are now fit for; that they are unable to perform their duties, and that they must sit down to learn. If this is admitted, and since we have the opportunity to learn—judging by the general international situation we shall have time to do so—we must do it, come what may. (*Stormy applause.*)

## 2

**SPEECH IN CLOSING THE CONGRESS  
APRIL 2**

Comrades, we have reached the end of our Congress.

The first difference that strikes one in comparing this Congress with the preceding one is the greater solidarity, the greater unanimity and greater organisational unity that have been displayed.

Only a small part of one of the sections of the opposition that existed at the last Congress has placed itself outside the Party.<sup>276</sup>

On the trade union question and on the New Economic Policy no disagreements, or hardly any disagreements, have been revealed in our Party.

The radically and fundamentally "new" achievement of this Congress is that it has provided vivid proof that our enemies are wrong in constantly reiterating that our Party is becoming senile and is losing its flexibility of mind and body

No. We have not lost this flexibility.

When the objective state of affairs in Russia, and all over the world, called for an advance, for a supremely bold, swift and determined onslaught on the enemy, we made that onslaught. If necessary, we shall do it again and again.

By that we raised our revolution to a height hitherto unparalleled in the world. No power on earth, no matter how much evil, hardship and suffering it may yet cause millions and hundreds of millions of people, can annul the major gains of our revolution, for these are no longer our but historic gains.

But when in the spring of 1921 it turned out that the vanguard of the revolution was in danger of becoming isolated from the masses of the people, from the masses of the peasants, whom it must skilfully lead forward, we unanimously and firmly decided to retreat. And on the whole, during the past year we retreated in good revolutionary order.

The proletarian revolutions maturing in all advanced countries of the world will be unable to solve their problems unless they combine the ability to fight heroically and to attack with the ability to retreat in good revolutionary order. The experience of the second period of our struggle, i.e., the experience of retreat, will in the future probably be just as useful to the workers of at least some countries, as the experience of the first period of our revolution, i.e., the experience of bold attack, will undoubtedly prove useful to the workers of all countries.

Now we have decided to halt the retreat.

This means that the entire object of our policy must be formulated in a new way.

The central feature of the situation now is that the vanguard must not shirk the work of educating itself, of remoulding itself, must not be afraid of frankly admitting that it is not sufficiently trained and lacks the necessary skill. The main thing now is to advance as an immeasurably wider and larger mass, and only together with the peasantry, proving to them by deeds, in practice, by experience, that we are learning, and that we shall learn to assist them, to lead them forward. In the present international situation, in the present state of the productive forces of Russia, this problem can be solved only very slowly, cautiously, in a business-like way, and by testing a thousand times in a practical way every step that is taken.

If voices are raised in our Party against this extremely slow and extremely cautious progress, these voices will be isolated ones.

The Party as a whole has understood—and will now prove by deeds that it has understood—that at the present time its work must be organised exactly along these lines, and since we have understood it, we shall achieve our goal!

I declare the Eleventh Congress of the Russian Communist Party closed.

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## ON THE TENTH ANNIVERSARY OF *PRAVDA*

It is ten years since *Pravda*, the legal—legal even under *tsarist* law—Bolshevik daily paper, was founded. This decade was preceded by, approximately, another decade: nine years (1903-12) since the emergence of Bolshevism, or thirteen years (1900-12), if we count from the founding in 1900 of the “Bolshevik-oriented” old *Iskra*.

The tenth anniversary of a Bolshevik daily published in Russia. . . . Only ten years have elapsed! But measured in terms of our struggle and movement they are equal to a hundred years. For the pace of social development in the past five years has been positively staggering if we apply the old yardstick of European philistines like the heroes of the Second and Two-and-a-Half Internationals. These civilised philistines are accustomed to regard as “natural” a situation in which hundreds of millions of people (over a thousand million, to be exact) in the colonies and in semi-dependent and poor countries tolerate the treatment meted out to Indians or Chinese, tolerate incredible exploitation, and outright depredation, and hunger, and violence, and humiliation, all in order that “civilised” men might “freely”, “democratically”, according to “parliamentary procedure”, decide whether the booty should be divided up peacefully, or whether ten million or so must be done to death in this division of the imperialist booty, yesterday between Germany and Britain, tomorrow between Japan and the U.S.A. (with France and Britain participating in one form or another).

The basic reason for this tremendous acceleration of world development is that new hundreds of millions of people have been drawn into it. The old bourgeois and imperialist Europe, which was accustomed to look upon itself as the centre of the universe, rotted and burst like a putrid ulcer in the first imperialist holocaust. No matter how the Spenglers and all the enlightened

philistines, who are capable of admiring (or even studying) Spengler, may lament it, this decline of the old Europe is but an episode in the history of the downfall of the world bourgeoisie, oversatiated by imperialist rapine and the oppression of the majority of the world's population.

That majority has now awakened and has begun a movement which even the "mightiest" powers cannot stem. They stand no chance. For the present "victors" in the first imperialist slaughter have not the strength to defeat small—tiny, I might say—Ireland, nor can they emerge victorious from the confusion in currency and finance issues that reigns in their own midst. Meanwhile, India and China are seething. They represent over 700 million people, and together with the neighbouring Asian countries, that are in all ways similar to them, over half of the world's inhabitants. Inexorably and with mounting momentum they are approaching their 1905, with the essential and important difference that in 1905 the revolution in Russia could still proceed (at any rate at the beginning) in isolation, that is, without other countries being immediately drawn in. But the revolutions that are maturing in India and China are being drawn into—have already been drawn into—the revolutionary struggle, the revolutionary movement, the world revolution.

The tenth anniversary of *Pravda*, the legal Bolshevik daily, is a clearly defined marker of this great acceleration of the greatest world revolution. In 1906-07, it seemed that the tsarist government had completely crushed the revolution. A few years later the Bolshevik Party was able—in a different form, by a different method—to penetrate into the very citadel of the enemy and daily, "legally", proceed with its work of undermining the accursed tsarist and landowner autocracy from within. A few more years passed, and the proletarian revolution, organised by Bolshevism, triumphed

Some ten or so revolutionaries shared in the founding of the old *Iskra* in 1900, and only about forty attended the birth of Bolshevism at the illegal congresses in Brussels and London in 1903.<sup>277</sup>

In 1912-13, when the legal Bolshevik *Pravda* came into being it had the support of hundreds of thousands of workers, who by their modest contributions were able to overcome both the oppression of tsarism and the competition of the Mensheviks, those petty-bourgeois traitors to socialism.

In November 1917, nine million electors out of a total of thirty-six million voted for the Bolsheviks in the elections to the Constituent Assembly. But if we take the actual struggle, and not merely the elections, at the close of October and in November 1917, the Bolsheviks had the support of the *majority* of the proletariat and

class-conscious peasantry, as represented by the majority of the delegates at the Second All-Russia Congress of Soviets, and by the majority of the most active and politically conscious section of the working people, namely, the twelve-million-strong army of that day.

These few figures illustrating the "acceleration" of the world revolutionary movement in the past twenty years give a very small and very incomplete picture. They afford only a very approximate idea of the history of no more than 150 million people, whereas in these twenty years the revolution has developed into an invincible force in countries with a total population of over a thousand million (the whole of Asia, not to forget South Africa, which recently reminded the world of its claim to *human* and not slavish existence, and by methods which were not altogether "parliamentary").

Some infant Spengleris—I apologise for the expression—may conclude (every variety of nonsense can be expected from the "clever" leaders of the Second and Two-and-a-Half Internationals) that this estimate of the revolutionary forces fails to take into account the European and American proletariat. These "clever" leaders always argue as if the fact that birth comes nine months after conception necessarily means that the exact hour and minute of birth can be defined beforehand, also the position of the infant during delivery, the condition of the mother and the exact degree of pain and danger both will suffer. Very "clever"! These gentry cannot for the life of them understand that from the point of view of the development of the international revolution the transition from Chartism to Henderson's servility to the bourgeoisie, or the transition from Varlin to Renaudel, from Wilhelm Liebknecht and Bebel to Südekum, Scheidemann and Noske, can only be likened to an automobile passing *from* a smooth highway stretching for hundreds of miles *to* a dirty stinking puddle of a few yards in length on that highway.

Men are the makers of history. But the Chartists, the Varlins and the Liebknechts applied their minds and hearts to it. The leaders of the Second and Two-and-a-Half Internationals apply other parts of the anatomy: they fertilise the ground for the appearance of new Chartists, new Varlins and new Liebknechts.

At this *most difficult* moment it would be most harmful for revolutionaries to indulge in self-deception. Though Bolshevism *has become* an international force, though in *all* the civilised and advanced countries new Chartists, new Varlins, new Liebknechts have been born, and are growing up as legal (just as legal as our *Pravda* was under the tsars ten years ago) Communist Parties, nonetheless, for the time being, the international bourgeoisie still remains incomparably stronger than its class enemy. This bour-



geoisie, which has done everything in its power to hamper the birth of proletarian power in Russia and to multiply tenfold the dangers and suffering attending its birth, is still in a position to condemn millions and tens of millions to torment and death through its whiteguard and imperialist wars, etc. That is something we must not forget. And we must skilfully adapt our tactics to this specific situation. The bourgeoisie is still able freely to torment, torture and kill. But it cannot halt the inevitable and—from the standpoint of world history—not far distant triumph of the revolutionary proletariat.

May 2, 1922

*Pravda* No. 98, May 5, 1922  
Signed: *N. Lenin*

*Collected Works*, Vol. 33,  
pp. 349-52

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## ON THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE U.S.S.R.<sup>278</sup>

LETTER TO L. B. KAMENEV  
FOR MEMBERS OF THE POLITICAL BUREAU, C.C. R.C.P.(B.)

September 26

Comrade Kamenev, Stalin has probably already sent you the resolution of his commission on the entry of the independent republics into the R.S.F.S.R.

If he has not, please take a copy from the secretary at once, and read it. I spoke about it with Sokolnikov yesterday, and with Stalin today. Tomorrow I shall see Mdivani (the Georgian Communist suspected of "independent" sentiments).

In my opinion the matter is of utmost importance. Stalin tends to be somewhat hasty. Give the matter good thought (you once intended to deal with it, and even had a bit to do with it); Zinoviev too.

Stalin has already consented to make one concession: in Clause 1, instead of "entry" into the R.S.F.S.R., to put:

"Formal unification with the R.S.F.S.R. in a union of Soviet Republics of Europe and Asia."

I hope the purport of this concession is clear: we consider ourselves, the Ukrainian S.S.R. and others, equal, and enter with them, on an equal basis, into a new union, a new federation, the Union of the Soviet Republics of Europe and Asia.

Clause 2 needs to be amended as well. What is needed besides the sessions of the All-Russia Central Executive Committee of the R.S.F.S.R. is a

"Federal All-Union Central Executive Committee of the Union of the Soviet Republics of Europe and Asia"

If the former should hold sessions once a week, and the latter once a week (or once a fortnight even), this may be easily arranged.

The important thing is not to provide material for the "pro-independence" people, not to destroy their *independence*, but to create another *new storey*, a federation of *equal* republics.

The second part of Clause 2 could stand: the dissatisfied will appeal (against decisions of the *Council of Labour and Defence*, and the *Council of People's Commissars*) to the Federal All-Union Central Executive Committee, *without thereby suspending* implementation (just as in the R.S.F.S.R.).

Clause 3 could stand, but its wording should be: "amalgamate in *federal* People's Commissariats whose seat shall be in Moscow, with the proviso that the respective People's Commissariats of the R.S.F.S.R. should have their authorised representatives with a small staff in all the republics *that have joined the Union of Republics of Europe and Asia.*"

Part 2 of Clause 3 remains; perhaps it could be said to emphasise equality: "by agreement of the *Central Executive Committees* of the member republics of the Union of the Soviet Republics of Europe and Asia."

Let's think about Part 3: perhaps we had better substitute "*mandatory*" for "desirable"? Or perhaps insert *conditionally* mandatory at least in the form of a *request for instructions* and the authority to decide without such instructions solely in cases of "specially urgent importance"?

Clause 4 could perhaps also be "amalgamate by agreement of the Central Executive Committees"?

Perhaps add to Clause 5: "with the establishment of joint (or general) conferences and congresses of a *purely consultative* nature (or perhaps of a *solely* consultative nature)?"

Appropriate alterations in the 1st and 2nd comments.

Stalin has agreed to delay submission of the resolution to the Political Bureau of the Central Committee until my return. I shall arrive on Monday, October 2. I should like to see you and Rykov for about two hours in the morning, say 12 noon to 2 p.m., and, if necessary, in the evening, say 5-7 or 6-8.

That is my tentative draft. I shall add or amend on the strength of talks with Mdivani and other comrades. I beg you to do the same, and to reply to me.

Yours,  
*Lenin*

P.S. Send copies to *all* members of the Political Bureau.

Written on September 26, 1922

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## RE THE MONOPOLY OF FOREIGN TRADE

### 1

To Comrade *Stalin*, Secretary of the C.C.  
October 13, 1922

The decision of the Plenary Meeting of the C.C. of October 6 (Minutes No 7, Point 3) institutes what seems to be an unimportant, partial reform: "implement a number of separate decisions of the Council of Labour and Defence on temporary permission for the import and export of individual categories of goods or on granting the permission for specific frontiers".

In actual fact, however, this wrecks the foreign trade monopoly. Small wonder that Comrade Sokolnikov has been trying to get this done and has succeeded. He has always been for it; he likes paradoxes and has always undertaken to prove that monopoly is not to our advantage. But it is surprising that people, who in principle favour the monopoly, have voted for this without asking for detailed information from any of the business executives.

What does the decision that has been adopted signify?

Purchasing offices are being opened for the import and export trade. The owner of such an office has the right to buy and sell *only* specially listed goods.

Where is the control over this? Where are the means of control?

In Russia flax costs 4 rubles 50 kopeks, in Britain it costs 14 rubles. All of us have read in *Capital* how capitalism changes internally and grows more daring when interest rates and profits rise quickly. All of us recall that capitalism is capable of taking deadly risks and that Marx recognised this long before the war and before capitalism began its "leaps".

What is the situation now? What force is capable of holding the peasants and the traders from extremely profitable deals? Cover Russia with a network of overseers? Catch the neighbour in a purchasing office and prove that his flax has been sold to be smuggled out of the country?

Comrade Sokolnikov's paradoxes are always clever, but one must distinguish between paradoxes and the grim truth.

No "legality" on such a question is at all possible in the Russian countryside. No comparison with smuggling in general ("All the same," they say, "smuggling is also flourishing in spite of the monopoly") is in any way correct; it is one thing to deal with the professional smuggler on the frontier and another with *all* the peasantry, who will *all* defend themselves and fight the authorities when they try to deprive them of the profit "belonging to them".

Before we have had an opportunity to test the monopoly system, which is only just beginning to bring us millions (and will give us tens of millions and more), we are introducing complete chaos; we are shaking loose the very supports that we have only just begun to strengthen.

We have begun to build up a system; the foreign trade monopoly and the co-operatives are both only in the process of being built up. Some results will be forthcoming in a year or two. The profit from foreign trade runs into hundreds per cent, and we are *beginning* to receive millions and tens of millions. We have *begun* to build up mixed companies; we have begun to learn to receive *half* of their (monstrous) profits. We can already see signs of very substantial state profits. We are giving this up in the hope of duties which cannot yield any comparable profit; we are giving everything up and chasing a spectre!

The question was brought up at the Plenary Meeting hastily. There was no serious discussion worth mentioning. We have no reason for haste. Our business executives are only just beginning to go into things. Is there anything like a correct approach to the matter when major questions of trade policy are decided in a slapdash manner, without collecting the pertinent material, without weighing the *pros* and *cons* with documents and figures? Tired people vote in a few minutes and that's the end of it. We have weighed less complicated political questions over and over again and frequently it took us several months to reach a decision.

I regret it very much that illness prevented me from attending the meeting on that day and that I am now compelled to seek an exception to the rule.

But I think that the question must be weighed and studied, that haste is harmful.

I propose that the decision on this question be deferred for two months, i.e., until the next Plenary Meeting; in the interim information and verified *documents* on the experience of our trade policy should be collected.

*V. Ulyanov (Lenin)*

P.S. In the conversation I had with Comrade Stalin yesterday (I did not attend the Plenary Meeting and tried to get my information from the comrades who were there), we spoke, incidentally, of the proposal temporarily to open the Petrograd and Novorossiisk ports. It seems to me that both examples show the extreme danger of such experiments even for a most restricted list of goods. The opening of the Petrograd port would intensify the smuggling of flax across the Finnish frontier to prodigious proportions. Instead of combating professional smugglers we shall have to combat *all the peasantry* of the flax-growing region. In this fight we shall almost assuredly be beaten, and beaten irreparably. The opening of the Novorossiisk port would quickly drain us of surplus grain. Is this a cautious policy at a time when our reserves for war are small? When a series of systematic measures to increase them have not yet had time to show results?

Then the following should be given consideration. The foreign trade monopoly has started a stream of gold into Russia. It is only just becoming possible to calculate; the first trip of such-and-such a merchant to Russia for six months has given him, say, hundreds per cent of profit; he increases his price for this right from 25 to 50 per cent in favour of the Commissariat of Foreign Trade. Furthermore, it has become possible for us to learn and to *increase* this profit. Everything will at once collapse, the whole work will stop, because if here and there various ports are opened for a time, *not a single merchant will pay a penny for this kind of "monopoly"*. That is obvious. Before taking such a risk things have to be thought over and weighed several times. Besides there is the political risk of letting through not foreign merchants by name, which we check, but the entire petty bourgeoisie in general.

With the start of foreign trade we have begun to reckon on an influx of gold I see no other settlement except for a liquor monopoly, but here there are very serious moral considerations, and also some business-like objections from Sokolnikov.

*Lenin*

P.P.S. I have just been informed (1.30 hours) that some business executives have applied for a postponement. I have not yet read this application, but I whole-heartedly support it. It is only a matter of two months.

*Lenin*

## 2

*To Comrade Stalin for the Plenary Meeting of the Central Committee*<sup>279</sup>

I think it is most important to discuss Comrade Bukharin's letter. His first point says that "neither Lenin nor Krasin says a word about the incalculable losses that are borne by the economy of the country as a consequence of the inefficiency of the People's Commissariat of Foreign Trade, due to the 'principles' on which it is organised; they do not say a word about the losses incurred because we ourselves are unable (and will not be able for a long time for quite understandable reasons) to mobilise the peasants' stocks of goods and use them for international trade".

This statement is positively untrue, for in his § 2 Krasin clearly discusses the formation of mixed companies as a means, firstly, of mobilising the peasants' stocks of goods, and secondly, of obtaining for our Exchequer no less than half the profits accruing from this mobilisation. Thus it is Bukharin who is trying to evade the issue, for he refuses to see that the profits accruing from the "mobilisation of the peasants' stocks of goods" will go wholly and entirely into the pockets of the Nepmen. The question is: will our People's Commissariat of Foreign Trade operate for the benefit of the Nepmen or of our proletarian state? This is a fundamental question over which a fight can and should be put up at a Party Congress.

Compared with this primary, fundamental question of principle, the question of the inefficiency of the People's Commissariat of Foreign Trade is only a minor one, for this inefficiency is only part and parcel of the inefficiency of all our People's Commissariats, and is due to their general social structure; to remedy this we shall require many years of persistent effort: to improve education and to raise the general standard.

The second point in Bukharin's theses says that "points like § 5 of Krasin's theses, for example, are fully applicable to concessions in general". This, too, is glaringly untrue, for Krasin's 5th thesis states that "the most pernicious exploiter, the merchant, profiteer, the agent of foreign capital, operating with dollars, pounds and Swedish crowns, will be artificially introduced into the rural districts". Nothing of the kind will happen in the case of concessions, which not only stipulate territory, but also envisage special permission to trade in specified articles; and what is most important, we control the trade in the articles specified in the concession. Without saying a single word in opposition to Krasin's argument

that we shall be unable to keep free trade within the limits laid down by the decision of the Plenary Meeting of October 6, that trade will be torn out of our hands by pressure brought to bear not only by smugglers, but also by the entire peasantry—without saying a word in answer to this fundamental economic and class argument, Bukharin hurls accusations against Krasin that are amazingly groundless.

In the third point of his letter Bukharin writes "§ 3 of Krasin's theses". (By mistake he mentions § 3 instead of § 4.) "We are maintaining our frontiers", and he asks: "What does this mean? In reality, this means that we are doing nothing. It is exactly like a shop with a splendid window, but with nothing on its shelves (the 'shut the shops system')." Krasin very definitely says that we are maintaining our frontiers not so much by tariffs, or frontier guards, as by means of our monopoly of foreign trade. Bukharin does not say a word to refute this obvious, positive and indisputable fact, nor can he do so. His sneering reference to the "shut the shops system" belongs to the category of expressions to which Marx, in his day, retorted with the expression "*free-trader vulgaris*",<sup>280</sup> for it is nothing more than a vulgar free-trader catch-phrase.

Further, in his fourth point, Bukharin accuses Krasin of failing to realise that we must improve our tariff system, and at the same time he says that I am wrong in talking about having inspectors all over the country, because export and import bases are the only point under discussion. Here, too, Bukharin's objections are amazingly thoughtless and quite beside the point; for Krasin not only realises that we must improve our tariff system and not only fully admits it, but says so with a definiteness that leaves no room for the slightest doubt. This improvement consists, firstly, in our adopting the monopoly of foreign trade, and secondly, in the formation of mixed companies.

Bukharin does not see—this is his most amazing mistake, and a purely theoretical one at that—that no tariff system can be effective in the epoch of imperialism when there are monstrous contrasts between pauper countries and immensely rich countries. Several times Bukharin mentions tariff barriers, failing to realise that under the circumstances indicated any of the wealthy industrial countries can completely break down such tariff barriers. To do this it will be sufficient for it to introduce an export bounty to encourage the export to Russia of goods upon which we have imposed high import duties. All of the industrial countries have more than enough money for this purpose, and by means of such a measure any of them could easily ruin our home industry.

Consequently, all Bukharin's arguments about the tariff system



would in practice only leave Russian industry entirely unprotected and lead to the adoption of free trading under a very flimsy veil. We must oppose this with all our might and carry our opposition right to a Party Congress, for in the present epoch of imperialism the only system of protection worthy of consideration is the monopoly of foreign trade.

Bukharin's accusation (in his fifth point) that Krasin fails to appreciate the importance of increasing circulation is utterly refuted by what Krasin says about mixed companies, for these mixed companies have no other purpose than to increase circulation and to provide real protection for our Russian industry and not the fictitious protection of tariff barriers.

Further, in point six, in answer to me, Bukharin writes that he attaches no importance to the fact that the peasants will enter into profitable transactions, and that the struggle will proceed between the Soviet government and the exporters and not between the peasants and the Soviet government. Here, too, he is absolutely wrong, for with the difference in prices that I have indicated (for example, in Russia the price of flax is 4 rubles 50 kopeks, while in Britain it is 14 rubles), the exporter will be able to mobilise all the peasants around himself in the swiftest and most certain manner. In practice, Bukharin is acting as an advocate of the profiteer, of the petty bourgeois and of the upper stratum of the peasantry in opposition to the industrial proletariat, which will be totally unable to build up its own industry and make Russia an industrial country unless it has the protection, not of tariffs, but of the monopoly of foreign trade. In view of the conditions at present prevailing in Russia, any other form of protection would be absolutely fictitious; it would be merely paper protection, from which the proletariat would derive no benefit whatever. Hence, from the viewpoint of the proletariat and of its industry, the present fight rages around fundamental principles. The mixed company system is the only system that can be really effective in improving the defective machinery of the People's Commissariat of Foreign Trade; for under this system foreign and Russian merchants will be operating side by side. If we fail to learn the business thoroughly even under such circumstances, it will prove that ours is a nation of hopeless fools.

By talking about "tariff barriers" we shall only be concealing from ourselves the dangers which Krasin points out quite clearly, and which Bukharin has failed to refute in the slightest degree.

I will add that the partial opening of the frontiers would be fraught with grave currency dangers, for in practice we should be reduced to the position of Germany; there would be the grave danger that the petty-bourgeoisie and all sorts of agents of *émigré*

Russia would penetrate into Russia, without our having the slightest possibility of exercising control over them.

The utilisation of mixed companies as a means of obtaining serious and long tuition is the only road to the restoration of our industry.

*Lenin*

Dictated by telephone  
on December 13, 1922

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# FOURTH CONGRESS OF THE COMMUNIST INTERNATIONAL<sup>281</sup>

NOVEMBER 5-DECEMBER 5, 1922

## FIVE YEARS OF THE RUSSIAN REVOLUTION AND THE PROSPECTS OF THE WORLD REVOLUTION

REPORT TO THE FOURTH CONGRESS  
OF THE COMMUNIST INTERNATIONAL  
NOVEMBER 15, 1922

(*Comrade Lenin is met with stormy, prolonged applause and a general ovation. All rise and join in singing "The Internationale."*) Comrades, I am down in the list as the main speaker, but you will understand that after my lengthy illness I am not able to make a long report. I can only make a few introductory remarks on the key questions. My subject will be a very limited one. The subject, "Five Years of the Russian Revolution and the Prospects of the World Revolution", is in general too broad and too large for one speaker to exhaust in a single speech. That is why I shall take only a small part of this subject, namely, the question of the New Economic Policy. I have deliberately taken only this small part in order to make you familiar with what is now the most important question—at all events, it is the most important to me, because I am now working on it.

And so, I shall tell you how we launched the New Economic Policy, and what results we have achieved with the aid of this policy. If I confine myself to this question, I shall, perhaps, succeed in giving you a general survey and a general idea of it.

To begin with how we arrived at the New Economic Policy, I must quote from an article I wrote in 1918.\* At the beginning of 1918, in a brief polemic, I touched on the question of the attitude we should adopt towards state capitalism. I then wrote:

"State capitalism would be a *step forward* as compared with the present state of affairs (i.e., the state of affairs at that time) in our Soviet Republic. If in approximately six months' time state capitalism became established in our Republic, this would be a great success and a sure guarantee that within a year socialism will have gained a permanently firm hold and will have become invincible in our country."\*\*

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\* See present edition, Vol. 2, pp. 623-46.—*Ed.*

\*\* *Ibid.*, p. 631.—*Ed.*

Of course, this was said at a time when we were more foolish than we are now, but not so foolish as to be unable to deal with such matters.

Thus, in 1918, I was of the opinion that with regard to the economic situation then obtaining in the Soviet Republic, state capitalism would be a step forward. This sounds very strange, and perhaps even absurd, for already at that time our Republic was a socialist republic and we were every day hastily—perhaps too hastily—adopting various new economic measures which could not be described as anything but socialist measures. Nevertheless, I then held the view that in relation to the economic situation then obtaining in the Soviet Republic state capitalism would be a step forward, and I explained my idea simply by enumerating the elements of the economic system of Russia. In my opinion these elements were the following: “(1) patriarchal, i.e., the most primitive form of agriculture; (2) small commodity production (this includes the majority of the peasants who trade in grain); (3) private capitalism; (4) state capitalism and (5) socialism.”<sup>\*</sup> All these economic elements were present in Russia at that time. I set myself the task of explaining the relationship of these elements to each other, and whether one of the non-socialist elements, namely, state capitalism, should not be rated higher than socialism. I repeat: it seems very strange to everyone that a non-socialist element should be rated higher than, regarded as superior to, socialism in a republic which declares itself a socialist republic. But the fact will become intelligible if you recall that we definitely did not regard the economic system of Russia as something homogeneous and highly developed; we were fully aware that in Russia we had patriarchal agriculture, i.e., the most primitive form of agriculture, alongside the socialist form. What role could state capitalism play in these circumstances?

I then asked myself which of these elements predominated? Clearly, in a petty bourgeois environment the petty-bourgeois element predominates. I recognised then that the petty-bourgeois element predominated: it was impossible to take a different view. The question I then put to myself—this was in a specific controversy which had nothing to do with the present question—was: what is our attitude towards state capitalism? And I replied: although it is not a socialist form, state capitalism would be for us, and for Russia, a more favourable form than the existing one. What does that show? It shows that we did not overrate either the rudiments or the principles of socialist economy, although we had already accomplished the social revolution. On the contrary, at that time we already realised to a certain extent that it

would be better if we first arrived at state capitalism and only after that at socialism.

I must lay special emphasis on this, because I assume that it is the only point of departure we can take, firstly, to explain what the present economic policy is; and, secondly, to draw very important practical conclusions for the Communist International. I do not want to suggest that we had then a ready-made plan of retreat. This was not the case. Those brief lines set forth in a polemic were not by any means a plan of retreat. For example, they made no mention whatever of that very important point, freedom to trade, which is of fundamental significance to state capitalism. Yet they did contain a general, even if indefinite, idea of retreat. I think that we should take note of that not only from the viewpoint of a country whose economic system was, and is to this day, very backward, but also from the viewpoint of the Communist International and the advanced West-European countries. For example, just now we are engaged in drawing up a programme. I personally think that it would be best to hold simply a general discussion on all the programmes, to make the first reading, so to speak, and to get them printed, but not to take a final decision now, this year. Why? First of all, of course, because I do not think we have considered all of them in sufficient detail, and also because we have given scarcely any thought to possible retreat, and to preparations for it. Yet that is a question which, in view of such fundamental changes in the world as the overthrow of capitalism and the building of socialism with all its enormous difficulties, absolutely requires our attention. We must not only know how to act when we pass directly to the offensive and are victorious. In revolutionary times this is not so difficult, nor so very important; at least, it is not the most decisive thing. There are always times in a revolution when the opponent loses his head; and if we attack him at such a time we may win an easy victory. But that is nothing, because our enemy, if he has enough endurance, can rally his forces beforehand, and so forth. He can easily provoke us to attack him and then throw us back for many years. For this reason, I think, the idea that we must prepare for ourselves the possibility of retreat is very important, and not only from the theoretical point of view. From the practical point of view, too, all the parties which are preparing to take the direct offensive against capitalism in the near future must now give thought to the problem of preparing for a possible retreat. I think it will do us no harm to learn this lesson together with all the other lessons which the experience of our revolution offers. On the contrary, it may prove beneficial in many cases.

Now that I have emphasised the fact that as early as 1918

we regarded state capitalism as a possible line of retreat, I shall deal with the results of our New Economic Policy. I repeat: at that time it was still a very vague idea, but in 1921, after we had passed through the most important stage of the Civil War—and passed through it victoriously—we felt the impact of a grave—I think it was the gravest—internal political crisis in Soviet Russia. This internal crisis brought to light discontent not only among a considerable section of the peasantry but also among the workers. This was the first and, I hope, the last time in the history of Soviet Russia that feeling ran against us among large masses of peasants, not consciously but instinctively. What gave rise to this peculiar, and for us, of course, very unpleasant, situation? The reason for it was that in our economic offensive we had run too far ahead, that we had not provided ourselves with adequate resources, that the masses sensed what we ourselves were not then able to formulate consciously but what we admitted soon after, a few weeks later, namely, that the direct transition to purely socialist forms, to purely socialist distribution, was beyond our available strength, and that if we were unable to effect a retreat so as to confine ourselves to easier tasks, we would face disaster. The crisis began, I think, in February 1921. In the spring of that year we decided unanimously—I did not observe any considerable disagreement among us on this question—to adopt the New Economic Policy. Now, after eighteen months have elapsed, at the close of 1922, we are able to make certain comparisons. What has happened? How have we fared during this period of over eighteen months? What is the result? Has this retreat been of any benefit to us? Has it really saved us, or is the result still indefinite? This is the main question that I put to myself, and I think that this main question is also of first-rate importance to all the Communist Parties; for if the reply is in the negative, we are all doomed. I think that all of us can, with a clear conscience, reply to this question in the affirmative, namely, that the past eighteen months provide positive and absolute proof that we have passed the test.

I shall now try to prove this. To do that I must briefly enumerate all the constituent parts of our economy.

First of all I shall deal with our financial system and our famous Russian ruble. I think we can say that Russian rubles are famous, if only for the reason that their number now in circulation exceeds a quadrillion. (*Laughter.*) That is something! It is an astronomical figure. I am sure that not everyone here knows what this figure signifies. (*General laughter.*) But we do not think that the figure is so very important even from the point of view of economic science, for the noughts can always be crossed out (*Laughter.*) We have achieved a thing or two in this art, which

is likewise of no importance from the economic point of view, and I am sure that in the further course of events we shall achieve much more. But what is really important is the problem of stabilising the ruble. We are now grappling with this problem, our best forces are working on it, and we attach decisive importance to it. If we succeed in stabilising the ruble for a long period, and then for all time, it will prove that we have won. In that case all these astronomical figures, these trillions and quadrillions, will not have mattered in the least. We shall then be able to place our economy on a firm basis, and develop it further on a firm basis. On this question I think I can cite some fairly important and decisive data. In 1921 the rate of exchange of the paper ruble remained stable for a period of less than three months. This year, 1922, which has not yet drawn to a close, the rate remained stable for a period of over five months. I think that this proof is sufficient. Of course, if you demand scientific proof that we shall definitely solve this problem, then it is not sufficient; but in general, I do not think it is possible to prove this entirely and conclusively. The data I have cited show that between last year, when we started on the New Economic Policy, and the present day, we have already learned to make progress. Since we have learned to do this, I am sure we shall learn to achieve further successes along this road, provided we avoid doing anything very foolish. The most important thing, however, is trade, namely, the circulation of commodities, which is essential for us. And since we have successfully coped with this problem for two years, in spite of having been in a state of war (for, as you know, Vladivostok was recaptured only a few weeks ago), and in spite of the fact that only now we are able to proceed with our economic activities in a really systematic way—since we have succeeded in keeping the rate of the paper ruble stable for five months instead of only three months, I think I can say that we have grounds to be pleased. After all, we stand alone. We have not received any loans, and are not receiving any now. We have been given no assistance by any of the powerful capitalist countries, which organise their capitalist economy so “brilliantly” that they do not know to this day which way they are going. By the Treaty of Versailles they have created a financial system that they themselves cannot make head or tail of. If these great capitalist countries are managing things in this way, I think that we, backward and uneducated as we are, may be pleased with the fact that we have grasped the most important thing—the conditions for the stabilisation of the ruble. This is proved not by theoretical analysis but by practical experience, which in my opinion is more important than all the theoretical discussions in the world. Practice shows that we have achieved decisive

results in that field, namely, we are beginning to push our economy towards the stabilisation of the ruble, which is of supreme importance for trade, for the free circulation of commodities, for the peasants, and for the vast masses of small producers.

Now I come to our social objectives. The most important factor, of course, is the peasantry. In 1921 discontent undoubtedly prevailed among a vast section of the peasantry. Then there was the famine. This was the severest trial for the peasants. Naturally, all our enemies abroad shouted: "There, that's the result of socialist economy!" Quite naturally, of course, they said nothing about the famine actually being the terrible result of the Civil War. All the landowners and capitalists who had begun their offensive against us in 1918 tried to make out that the famine was the result of socialist economy. The famine was indeed a great and grave disaster which threatened to nullify the results of all our organisational and revolutionary efforts.

And so, I ask now, after this unprecedented and unexpected disaster, what is the position today, after we have introduced the New Economic Policy, after we have granted the peasants freedom to trade? The answer is clear and obvious to everyone; in one year the peasants have not only got over the famine, but have paid so much tax in kind that we have already received hundreds of millions of poods of grain, and that almost without employing any measures of coercion. Peasant uprisings, which previously, before 1921, were, so to speak, a common occurrence in Russia, have almost completely ceased. The peasants are satisfied with their present position. We can confidently assert that. We think that this evidence is more important than any amount of statistical proof. Nobody questions the fact that the peasants are a decisive factor in our country. And the position of the peasantry is now such that we have no reason to fear any movement against us from that quarter. We say that quite consciously, without exaggeration. This we have already achieved. The peasantry may be dissatisfied with one aspect or another of the work of our authorities. They may complain about this. That is possible, of course, and inevitable, because our machinery of state and our state-operated economy are still too inefficient to avert it; but any serious dissatisfaction with us on the part of the peasantry as a whole is quite out of the question. This has been achieved in the course of one year. I think that is already quite a lot.

Now I come to our light industry. In industry we have to make a distinction between heavy and light industry because the situation in them is different. As regards light industry, I can safely say that there is a general revival. I shall not go into details. I did not set out to quote a lot of statistics. But this general



impression is based on facts, and I can assure you that it is not based on anything untrue or inaccurate. We can speak of a general revival in light industry, and, as a result, of a definite improvement in the conditions of the workers in Petrograd and Moscow. In other districts this is observed to a lesser degree, because heavy industry predominates in them. So this does not apply generally. Nevertheless, I repeat, light industry is undoubtedly on the upgrade, and the conditions of the workers in Petrograd and Moscow have unquestionably improved. In the spring of 1921 there was discontent among the workers in both these cities. That is definitely not the case now. We, who watch the conditions and mood of the workers from day to day, make no mistake on that score.

The third question is that of heavy industry. I must say that the situation here is still grave. Some turn for the better occurred in 1921-22, so that we may hope that the situation will improve in the near future. We have already gathered some of the resources necessary for this. In a capitalist country a loan of hundreds of millions would be required to improve the situation in heavy industry. No improvement would be possible without it. The economic history of the capitalist countries shows that heavy industry in backward countries can only be developed with the aid of long-term loans of hundreds of millions of dollars or gold rubles. We did not get such loans, and so far have received nothing. All that is now being written about concessions and so forth is not worth much more than the paper it is written on. We have written a great deal about this lately and in particular about the Urquhart concession.<sup>282</sup> Yet I think our concessions policy is a very good one. However, we have not concluded a single profitable concession agreement so far. I ask you to bear that in mind. Thus, the situation in heavy industry is really a very grave problem for our backward country, because we cannot count on loans from the wealthy countries. In spite of that, we see a tangible improvement, and we also see that our trading has brought us some capital. True, it is only a very modest sum as yet—a little over twenty million gold rubles. At any rate, a beginning has been made; our trade is providing us with funds which we can employ for improving the situation in heavy industry. At the present moment, however, our heavy industry is still in great difficulties. But I think that the decisive circumstance is that we are already in a position to save a little. And we shall go on saving. We must economise now though it is often at the expense of the population. We are trying to reduce the state budget, to reduce staffs in our government offices. Later on, I shall have a few words to say about our state apparatus. At all events, we must reduce it. We must economise

as much as possible. We are economising in all things, even in schools. We must do this, because we know that unless we save heavy industry, unless we restore it, we shall not be able to build up an industry at all; and without an industry we shall go under as an independent country. We realise this very well.

The salvation of Russia lies not only in a good harvest on the peasant farms—that is not enough; and not only in the good condition of light industry, which provides the peasantry with consumer goods—this, too, is not enough; we also need *heavy* industry. And to put it in a good condition will require several years of work.

Heavy industry needs state subsidies. If we are not able to provide them, we shall be doomed as a civilised state, let alone as a socialist state. In this respect, we have taken a determined step. We have begun to accumulate the funds that we need to put heavy industry on its feet. True, the sum we have obtained so far barely exceeds twenty million gold rubles; but at any rate this sum is available, and it is earmarked exclusively for the purpose of reviving our heavy industry.

I think that, on the whole, I have, as I have promised, briefly outlined the principal elements of our economy, and feel that we may draw the conclusion from all this that the New Economic Policy has already yielded dividends. We already have proof that, as a state, we are able to trade, to maintain our strong positions in agriculture and industry, and to make progress. Practical activity has proved it. I think this is sufficient for us for the time being. We shall have to learn much, and we have realised that we still have much to learn. We have been in power for five years, and during these five years we have been in a state of war. Hence, we have been successful.

This is understandable, because the peasantry were on our side. Probably no one could have supported us more than they did. They were aware that the whiteguards had the landowners behind them, and they hate the landowners more than anything in the world. That is why the peasantry supported us with all their enthusiasm and loyalty. It was not difficult to get the peasantry to defend us against the whiteguards. The peasants, who had always hated war, did all they possibly could in the war against the whiteguards, in the Civil War against the landowners. But this was not all, because in substance it was only a matter of whether power would remain in the hands of the landowners or of the peasants. This was not enough for us. The peasants know that we have seized power for the workers and that our aim is to use this power to establish the socialist system. Therefore, the most important thing for us was to lay the economic foundation for socialist economy. We could not do it directly. We

had to do it in a roundabout way. The state capitalism that we have introduced in our country is of a special kind. It does not agree with the usual conception of state capitalism. We hold all the key positions. We hold the land; it belongs to the state. This is very important, although our opponents try to make out that it is of no importance at all. That is untrue. The fact that the land belongs to the state is extremely important, and economically it is also of great practical purport. This we have achieved, and I must say that all our future activities should develop only within that framework. We have already succeeded in making the peasantry content and in reviving both industry and trade. I have already said that our state capitalism differs from state capitalism in the literal sense of the term in that our proletarian state not only owns the land, but also all the vital branches of industry. To begin with, we have leased only a certain number of the small and medium plants, but all the rest remain in our hands. As regards trade, I want to re-emphasise that we are trying to found mixed companies, that we are already forming them, i.e., companies in which part of the capital belongs to private capitalists—and foreign capitalists at that—and the other part belongs to the state. Firstly, in this way we are learning how to trade, and that is what we need. Secondly, we are always in a position to dissolve these companies if we deem it necessary, and do not, therefore, run any risks, so to speak. We are learning from the private capitalist and looking round to see how we can progress and what mistakes we make. It seems to me that I need say no more.

I should still like to deal with several minor points. Undoubtedly, we have done, and will still do, a host of foolish things. No one can judge and see this better than I. (*Laughter.*) Why do we do these foolish things? The reason is clear: firstly, because we are a backward country; secondly, because education in our country is at a low level; and thirdly, because we are getting no outside assistance. Not a single civilised country is helping us. On the contrary, they are all working against us. Fourthly, our machinery of state is to blame. We took over the old machinery of state, and that was our misfortune. Very often this machinery operates against us. In 1917, after we seized power, the government officials sabotaged us. This frightened us very much and we pleaded: "Please come back." They all came back, but that was our misfortune. We now have a vast army of government employees, but lack sufficiently educated forces to exercise real control over them. In practice it often happens that here at the top, where we exercise political power, the machine functions somehow; but down below government employees have arbitrary control and they often exercise it in such a way as to

counteract our measures. At the top, we have, I don't know how many, but at all events, I think, no more than a few thousand, at the outside several tens of thousands of our own people. Down below, however, there are hundreds of thousands of old officials whom we got from the tsar and from bourgeois society and who, partly deliberately and partly unwittingly, work against us. It is clear that nothing can be done in that respect overnight. It will take many years of hard work to improve the machinery, to remodel it, and to enlist new forces. We are doing this fairly quickly, perhaps too quickly. Soviet schools and Workers' Faculties have been formed; a few hundred thousand young people are studying; they are studying too fast perhaps, but at all events, a start has been made, and I think this work will bear fruit. If we do not work too hurriedly we shall, in a few years' time, have a large body of young people capable of thoroughly overhauling our state apparatus.

I have said that we have done a host of foolish things, but I must also say a word or two in this respect about our enemies. If our enemies blame us and say that Lenin himself admits that the Bolsheviks have done a host of foolish things, I want to reply to this: yes, but you know, the foolish things we have done are nonetheless very different from yours. We have only just begun to learn, but are learning so methodically that we are certain to achieve good results. But since our enemies, i.e., the capitalists and the heroes of the Second International, lay stress on the foolish things we have done, I take the liberty, for the sake of comparison, to cite the words of a celebrated Russian author, which I shall amend to read as follows: if the Bolsheviks do foolish things the Bolshevik says, "Twice two are five", but when their enemies, i.e., the capitalists and the heroes of the Second International, do foolish things, they get, "Twice two make a tallow candle".<sup>23</sup> That is easily proved. Take, for example, the agreement concluded by the U.S.A., Great Britain, France and Japan with Kolchak. I ask you, are there any more enlightened and more powerful countries in the world? But what has happened? They promised to help Kolchak without calculation, without reflection, and without circumspection. It ended in a fiasco, which, it seems to me, is difficult for the human intellect to grasp.

Or take another example, a closed and more important one: the Treaty of Versailles. I ask you, what have the "great" powers which have 'covered themselves with glory' done? How will they find a way out of this chaos and confusion? I don't think it will be an exaggeration to repeat that the foolish things we have done are nothing compared with those done in concert by the capitalist countries, the capitalist world and the Second

International. That is why I think that the outlook for the world revolution—a subject which I must touch on briefly—is favourable. And given a certain definite condition, I think it will be even better. I should like to say a few words about this.

At the Third Congress, in 1921, we adopted a resolution on the organisational structure of the Communist Parties and on the methods and content of their activities.<sup>284</sup> The resolution is an excellent one, but it is almost entirely Russian, that is to say, everything in it is based on Russian conditions. This is its good point, but it is also its failing. It is its failing because I am sure that no foreigner can read it. I have read it again before saying this. In the first place, it is too long, containing fifty or more points. Foreigners are not usually able to read such things. Secondly, even if they read it, they will not understand it because it is too Russian. Not because it is written in Russian—it has been excellently translated into all languages—but because it is thoroughly imbued with the Russian spirit. And thirdly, if by way of exception some foreigner does understand it, he cannot carry it out. This is its third defect. I have talked with a few of the foreign delegates and hope to discuss matters in detail with a large number of delegates from different countries during the Congress, although I shall not take part in its proceedings, for unfortunately it is impossible for me to do that. I have the impression that we made a big mistake with this resolution, namely, that we blocked our own road to further success. As I have said already, the resolution is excellently drafted; I am prepared to subscribe to every one of its fifty or more points. But we have not learnt how to present our Russian experience to foreigners. All that was said in the resolution has remained a dead letter. If we do not realise this, we shall be unable to move ahead. I think that after five years of the Russian revolution the most important thing for all of us, Russian and foreign comrades alike, is to sit down and study. We have only now obtained the opportunity to do so. I do not know how long this opportunity will last. I do not know for how long the capitalist powers will give us the opportunity to study in peace. But we must take advantage of every moment of respite from fighting, from war, to study, and to study from scratch.

The whole Party and all strata of the population of Russia prove this by their thirst for knowledge. This striving to learn shows that our most important task today is to study and to study hard. Our foreign comrades, too, must study. I do not mean that they have to learn to read and write and to understand what they read, as we still have to do. There is a dispute as to whether this concerns proletarian or bourgeois culture. I shall leave that question open. But one thing is certain: we have

to begin by learning to read and write and to understand what we read. Foreigners do not need that. They need something more advanced: first of all, among other things they must learn to understand what we have written about the organisational structure of the Communist Parties, and what the foreign comrades have signed without reading and understanding. This must be their first task. That resolution must be carried out. It cannot be carried out overnight; that is absolutely impossible. The resolution is too Russian, it reflects Russian experience. That is why it is quite unintelligible to foreigners, and they cannot be content with hanging it in a corner like an icon and praying to it. Nothing will be achieved that way. They must assimilate part of the Russian experience. Just how that will be done, I do not know. The fascists in Italy may, for example, render us a great service by showing the Italians that they are not yet sufficiently enlightened and that their country is not yet ensured against the Black Hundreds. Perhaps this will be very useful. We Russians must also find ways and means of explaining the principles of this resolution to the foreigners. Unless we do that, it will be absolutely impossible for them to carry it out. I am sure that in this connection we must tell not only the Russians, but the foreign comrades as well, that the most important thing in the period we are now entering is to study. We are studying in the general sense. They, however, must study in the special sense, in order that they may really understand the organisation, structure, method and content of revolutionary work. If they do that, I am sure the prospects of the world revolution will be not only good, but excellent. (*Stormy, prolonged applause. Shouts of "Long live our Comrade Lenin!" evoke a fresh stormy ovation.*)

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## SPEECH AT A PLENARY SESSION OF THE MOSCOW SOVIET NOVEMBER 20, 1922

(*Stormy applause. "The Internationale" is sung.*) Comrades, I regret very much and apologise that I have been unable to come to your session earlier. As far as I know you intended a few weeks ago to give me an opportunity of attending the Moscow Soviet. I could not come because after my illness, from December onwards, I was incapacitated, to use the professional term, for quite a long time, and because of this reduced ability to work had to postpone my present address from week to week. A very considerable portion of my work which, as you will remember, I had first piled on Comrade Tsyurupa, and then on Comrade Rykov, I also had to pile additionally on Comrade Kamenev. And I must say that, to employ a simile I have already used, he was suddenly burdened with two loads. Though, to continue the simile, it should be said that the horse has proved to be an exceptionally capable and zealous one. (*Applause.*) All the same, however, nobody is supposed to drag two loads, and I am now waiting impatiently for Comrades Tsyurupa and Rykov to return, and we shall divide up the work at least a little more fairly. As for myself, in view of my reduced ability to work it takes me much more time to look into matters than I should like.

In December 1921, when I had to stop working altogether, it was the year's end. We were effecting the transition to the New Economic Policy, and it turned out already then that, although we had embarked upon this transition in the beginning of 1921, it was quite a difficult, I would say a very difficult, transition. We have now been effecting this transition for more than eighteen months, and one would think that it was time the majority took up new places and disposed themselves according to the new conditions, particularly those of the New Economic Policy.

As to foreign policy, we had the fewest changes in that field. We pursued the line that we had adopted earlier, and I think I can say with a clear conscience that we pursued it quite consistently and with enormous success. There is no need, I think, to deal with that in detail; the capture of Vladivostok, the ensuing demonstration and the declaration of federation which you read in the press the other day have proved and shown with the utmost clarity that no changes are necessary in this respect.<sup>285</sup> The road we are on is absolutely clearly and well defined, and has ensured us success in face of all the countries of the world although some of them are still prepared to declare that they refuse to sit at one table with us. Nevertheless, economic relations, followed by diplomatic relations, are improving, must improve, and certainly will improve. Every country which resists this risks being late, and, perhaps in some quite substantial things, it risks being at a disadvantage. All of us see this now, and not only from the press, from the newspapers. I think that in their trips abroad comrades are also finding the changes very great. In that respect, to use an old simile, we have not changed to other trains, or to other conveyances.

But as regards our home policy, the change we made in the spring of 1921, which was necessitated by such extremely powerful and convincing circumstances that no debates or disagreements arose among us about it—that change continues to cause us some difficulties, great difficulties, I would say. Not because we have any doubts about the need for the turn—no doubts exist in that respect—not because we have any doubts as to whether the test of our New Economic Policy has yielded the successes we expected. No doubts exist on that score—I can say this quite definitely—either in the ranks of our Party or in the ranks of the huge mass of non-Party workers and peasants.

In this sense the problem presents no difficulties. The difficulties we have stem from our being faced with a task whose solution very often requires the services of new people, extraordinary measures and extraordinary methods. Doubts still exist among us as to whether this or that is correct. There are changes in one direction or another. And it should be said that both will continue for quite a long time. "The New Economic Policy!" A strange title. It was called a New Economic Policy because it turned things back. We are now retreating, going back, as it were; but we are doing so in order, after first retreating, to take a running start and make a bigger leap forward. It was on this condition alone that we retreated in pursuing our New Economic Policy. Where and how we must now regroup, adapt and reorganise in order to start a most stubborn offensive after our retreat, we do not yet know. To carry out all these operations properly



we need, as the proverb says, to look not ten but a hundred times before we leap. We must do so in order to cope with the incredible difficulties we encounter in dealing with all our tasks and problems. You know perfectly well what sacrifices have been made to achieve what has been achieved; you know how long the Civil War has dragged on and what effort it has cost. Well now, the capture of Vladivostok has shown all of us (though Vladivostok is a long way off, it is after all one of our own towns) (*prolonged applause*) everybody's desire to join us, to join in our achievements. The Russian Soviet Federative Socialist Republic now stretches from here to there. This desire has rid us both of our civil enemies and of the foreign enemies who attacked us. I am referring to Japan.

We have won quite a definite diplomatic position, recognised by the whole world. All of you see it. You see its results, but how much time we needed to get it! We have now won the recognition of our rights by our enemies both in economic and in commercial policy. This is proved by the conclusion of trade agreements.

We can see why we, who eighteen months ago took the path of the so-called New Economic Policy, are finding it so incredibly difficult to advance along that path. We live in a country devastated so severely by war, knocked out of anything like the normal course of life, in a country that has suffered and endured so much, that willy-nilly we are beginning all our calculations with a very, very small percentage—the pre-war percentage. We apply this yardstick to the conditions of our life, we sometimes do so very impatiently, heatedly, and always end up with the conviction that the difficulties are vast. The task we have set ourselves in this field seems all the more vast because we are comparing it with the state of affairs in any ordinary bourgeois country. We have set ourselves this task because we understood that it was no use expecting the wealthy powers to give us the assistance usually forthcoming under such circumstances.\* After the Civil War we have been subjected to very nearly a boycott, that is, we have been told that the economic ties that are customary and normal in the capitalist world will not be maintained in our case.

Over eighteen months have passed since we undertook the

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\* In the verbatim report the text reads further: "and that even if we took into consideration the extremely high, say such-and-such a rate of interest, that is imposed in these circumstances on a country that, to use the accepted term, is rendered aid. Properly speaking, these rates of interest are very far from being aid. To put it bluntly, they would deserve a far less polite term than the word aid, but even these usual conditions would have been onerous for us."—Ed.

New Economic Policy, and even a longer period has passed since we concluded our first international treaty. Nonetheless, this boycott of us by all the bourgeoisie and all governments continues to be felt. We could not count on anything else when we adopted the new economic conditions; yet we had no doubt that we had to make the change and achieve success single-handed. The further we go, the clearer it becomes that any aid that may be rendered to us, that will be rendered to us by the capitalist powers, will, far from eliminating this condition, in all likelihood and in the overwhelming majority of cases intensify it, accentuate it still further. "Single-handed"—we told ourselves. "Single-handed"—we are told by almost every capitalist country with which we have concluded any deals, with which we have undertaken any engagements, with which we have begun any negotiations. And that is where the special difficulty lies. We must realise this difficulty. We have built up our own political system in more than three years of work, incredibly hard work that was incredibly full of heroism. In the position in which we were till now we had no time to see whether we would smash something needlessly, no time to see whether there would be many sacrifices, because there were sacrifices enough, because the struggle which we then began (you know this perfectly well and there is no need to dwell on it) was a life-and-death struggle against the old social system, against which we fought to forge for ourselves a right to existence, to peaceful development. And we have won it. It is not we who say this, it is not the testimony of witnesses who may be accused of being partial to us. It is the testimony of witnesses who are in the camp of our enemies and who are naturally partial—not in our favour, however, but against us. These witnesses were in Denikin's camp. They directed the occupation. And we know that their partiality cost us very dear, cost us colossal destruction. We suffered all sorts of losses on their account, and lost values of all kinds, including the greatest of all values—human lives—on an incredibly large scale. Now we must scrutinise our tasks most carefully and understand that the main task will be not to give up our previous gains. We shall not give up a single one of our old gains. (*Applause*) Yet we are also faced with an entirely new task; the old may prove a downright obstacle. To understand this task is most difficult. Yet it must be understood, so that we may learn how to work when, so to speak, it is necessary to turn ourselves inside out. I think, comrades, that these words and slogans are understandable, because for nearly a year, during my enforced absence, you have had in practice, handling the jobs on hand, to speak and think of this in various ways and on hundreds of occasions, and I am confident that your reflections on that score can only lead

to one conclusion, namely, that today we must display still more of the flexibility which we employed till now in the Civil War.

We must not abandon the old. The series of concessions that adapt us to the capitalist powers is a series of concessions that enables them to make contact with us, ensures them a profit which is sometimes bigger, perhaps, than it should be. At the same time, we are conceding but a little part of the means of production, which are held almost entirely by our state. The other day the papers discussed the concession proposed by the Englishman Urquhart,<sup>286</sup> who has hitherto been against us almost throughout the Civil War. He used to say: "We shall achieve our aim in the Civil War against Russia, against the Russia that has dared to deprive us of this and of that." And after all that we had to enter into negotiations with him. We did not refuse them, we undertook them with the greatest joy, but we said: "Beg your pardon, but we shall not give up what we have won. Our Russia is so big, our economic potentialities are so numerous, and we feel justified in not rejecting your kind proposal, but we shall discuss it soberly, like businessmen." True, nothing came of our first talk, because we could not agree to his proposal for political reasons. We had to reject it. So long as the British did not entertain the possibility of our participating in the negotiations on the Straits, the Dardanelles,<sup>287</sup> we had to reject it, but right after doing so we had to start examining the matter in substance. We discussed whether or not it was of advantage to us, whether we would profit from concluding this concession agreement, and if so, under what circumstances it would be profitable. We had to talk about the price. That, comrades, is what shows you clearly how much our present approach to problems should differ from our former approach. Formerly the Communist said: "I give my life", and it seemed very simple to him, although it was not always so simple. Now, however, we Communists face quite another task. We must now take all things into account, and each of you must learn to be prudent. We must calculate how, in the capitalist environment, we can ensure our existence, how we can profit by our enemies, who, of course, will bargain, who have never forgotten how to bargain and will bargain at our expense. We are not forgetting that either, and do not in the least imagine commercial people anywhere turning into lambs and, having turned into lambs, offering us blessings of all sorts for nothing. That does not happen, and we do not expect it, but count on the fact that we, who are accustomed to putting up a fight, will find a way out and prove capable of trading, and profiting, and emerging safely from difficult economic situations. That is a very difficult task. That is the task we are

working on now. I should like us to realise clearly how great is the abyss between the old and the new tasks. However great the abyss may be, we learned to manoeuvre during the war, and we must understand that the manoeuvre we now have to perform, in the midst of which we now are, is the most difficult one. But then it seems to be our last manoeuvre. We must test our strength in this field and prove that we have learned more than just the lessons of yesterday and do not just keep repeating the fundamentals. Nothing of the kind. We have begun to relearn, and shall relearn in such a way that we shall achieve definite and obvious success. And it is for the sake of this relearning, I think, that we must again firmly promise one another that under the name of the New Economic Policy we have turned back, but turned back in such a way as to surrender nothing of the new, and yet to give the capitalists such advantages as will compel any state, however hostile to us, to establish contacts and to deal with us. Comrade Krasin, who has had many talks with Urquhart, the head and backbone of the whole intervention, said that Urquhart, after all his attempts to foist the old system on us at all costs, throughout Russia, seated himself at the same table with him, with Krasin, and began asking: "What's the price? How much? For how many years?" (*Applause.*) This is still quite far from our concluding concession deals and thus entering into treaty relations that are perfectly precise and binding—from the viewpoint of bourgeois society—but we can already see that we are coming to it, have nearly come to it, but have not quite arrived. We must admit that, comrades, and not be swell-headed. We are still far from having fully achieved the things that will make us strong, self-reliant and calmly confident that no capitalist deals can frighten us, calmly confident that however difficult a deal may be we shall conclude it, we shall get to the bottom of it and settle it. That is why the work—both political and Party—that we have begun in this sphere must be continued, and that is why we must change from the old methods to entirely new ones.

We still have the old machinery, and our task now is to remould it along new lines. We cannot do so at once, but we must see to it that the Communists we have are properly placed. What we need is that they, the Communists, should control the machinery they are assigned to, and not, as so often happens with us, that the machinery should control them. We should make no secret of it, and speak of it frankly. Such are the tasks and the difficulties that confront us—and that at a moment when we have set out on our practical path, when we must not approach socialism as if it were an icon painted in festive colours. We need to take the right direction, we need to see that everything is checked,

that the masses, the entire population, check the path we follow and say: "Yes, this is better than the old system." That is the task we have set ourselves. Our Party, a little group of people in comparison with the country's total population, has tackled this job. This tiny nucleus has set itself the task of remaking everything, and it will do so. We have proved that this is no utopia but a cause which people live by. We have all seen this. This has already been done. We must remake things in such a way that the great majority of the masses, the peasants and workers, will say: "It is not you who praise yourselves, but we. We say that you have achieved splendid results, after which no intelligent person will ever dream of returning to the old." We have not reached that point yet. *That is why NEP remains the main, current, and all-embracing slogan of today.* We shall not forget a single one of the slogans we learned yesterday. We can say that quite calmly, without the slightest hesitation, say it to anybody, and every step we take demonstrates it. But we still have to adapt ourselves to the New Economic Policy. We must know how to overcome, to reduce to a definite minimum all its negative features, which there is no need to enumerate and which you know perfectly well. We must know how to arrange everything shrewdly. Our legislation gives us every opportunity to do so. Shall we be able to get things going properly? That is still far from being settled. We are making a study of things. Every issue of our Party newspaper offers you a dozen articles which tell you that at such-and-such a factory, owned by so-and-so, the rental terms are such-and-such, whereas at another, where our Communist comrade is the manager, the terms are such-and-such. Does it yield a profit or not, does it pay its way or not? We have approached the very core of the everyday problems, and that is a tremendous achievement. Socialism is no longer a matter of the distant future, or an abstract picture, or an icon. Our opinion of icons is the same—a very bad one. We have brought socialism into everyday life and must here see how matters stand. That is the task of our day, the task of our epoch. Permit me to conclude by expressing confidence that difficult as this task may be, new as it may be compared with our previous task, and numerous as the difficulties may be that it entails, we shall all—not in a day, but in a few years—all of us together fulfil it whatever the cost, so that NEP Russia will become socialist Russia. (*Stormy, prolonged applause.*)

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# LAST LETTERS AND ARTICLES

DECEMBER 23, 1922-MARCH 2, 1923

## I

### LETTER TO THE CONGRESS<sup>288</sup>

I would urge strongly that at this Congress a number of changes be made in our political structure.

I want to tell you of the considerations to which I attach most importance.

At the head of the list I set an increase in the number of Central Committee members to a few dozen or even a hundred. It is my opinion that without this reform our Central Committee would be in great danger if the course of events were not quite favourable for us (and that is something we cannot count on).

Then, I intend to propose that the Congress should on certain conditions invest the decisions of the State Planning Commission with legislative force, meeting, in this respect, the wishes of Comrade Trotsky—to a certain extent and on certain conditions.

As for the first point, i.e., increasing the number of C.C. members, I think it must be done in order to raise the prestige of the Central Committee, to do a thorough job of improving our administrative machinery and to prevent conflicts between small sections of the C.C. from acquiring excessive importance for the future of the Party.

It seems to me that our Party has every right to demand from the working class 50 to 100 C.C. members, and that it could get them from it without unduly taxing the resources of that class.

Such a reform would considerably increase the stability of our Party and ease its struggle in the encirclement of hostile states, which, in my opinion, is likely to, and must, become much more acute in the next few years. I think that the stability of our Party would gain a thousandfold by such a measure.

*Lenin*

December 23, 1922

Taken down by M. V.

## II

Continuation of the notes.  
December 24, 1922

By stability of the Central Committee, of which I spoke above, I mean measures against a split, as far as such measures can at all be taken. For, of course, the whiteguard in *Russkaya Mysl*<sup>289</sup> (it seems to have been S. S. Oldenburg) was right when, first, in the whiteguards' game against Soviet Russia he banked on a split in our Party, and when, secondly, he banked on grave differences in our Party to cause that split.

Our Party relies on two classes and therefore its instability would be possible and its downfall inevitable if there were no agreement between those two classes. In that event this or that measure, and generally all talk about the stability of our C.C., would be futile. No measures of any kind could prevent a split in such a case. But I hope that this is too remote a future and too improbable an event to talk about.

I have in mind stability as a guaranter against a split in the immediate future, and I intend to deal here with a few ideas concerning personal qualities.

I think that from this standpoint the prime factors in the question of stability are such members of the C.C. as Stalin and Trotsky. I think relations between them makes up the greater part of the danger of a split, which could be avoided, and this purpose, in my opinion, would be served, among other things, by increasing the number of C.C. members to 50 or 100.

Comrade Stalin, having become Secretary-General, has unlimited authority concentrated in his hands, and I am not sure whether he will always be capable of using that authority with sufficient caution. Comrade Trotsky, on the other hand, as his struggle against the C.C. on the question of the People's Commissariat for Communications has already proved, is distinguished not only by outstanding ability. He is personally perhaps the most capable man in the present C.C., but he has displayed excessive self-assurance and shown excessive preoccupation with the purely administrative side of the work.

These two qualities of the two outstanding leaders of the present C.C. can inadvertently lead to a split, and if our Party does not take steps to avert this, the split may come unexpectedly.

I shall not give any further appraisals of the personal qualities of other members of the C.C. I shall just recall that the October episode with Zinoviev and Kamenev<sup>290</sup> was, of course, no accident, but neither can the blame for it be laid upon them personally, any more than non-Bolshevism can upon Trotsky.

Speaking of the young C.C. members, I wish to say a few words about Bukharin and Pyatakov. They are, in my opinion, the most outstanding figures (among the youngest ones), and the following must be borne in mind about them: Bukharin is not only a most valuable and major theorist of the Party; he is also rightly considered the favourite of the whole Party, but his theoretical views can be classified as fully Marxist only with great reserve, for there is something scholastic about him (he has never made a study of dialectics, and, I think, never fully understood it).

December 25. As for Pyatakov, he is unquestionably a man of outstanding will and outstanding ability, but shows too much zeal for administrating and the administrative side of the work to be relied upon in a serious political matter.

Both of these remarks, of course, are made only for the present, on the assumption that both these outstanding and devoted Party workers fail to find an occasion to enhance their knowledge and amend their one-sidedness.

*Lenin*

December 25, 1922

Taken down by M. V.

### ADDITION TO THE LETTER OF DECEMBER 24, 1922

Stalin is too rude and this defect, although quite tolerable in our midst and in dealings among us Communists, becomes intolerable in a Secretary-General. That is why I suggest that the comrades think about a way of removing Stalin from that post and appointing another man in his stead who in all other respects differs from Comrade Stalin in having only one advantage, namely, that of being more tolerant, more loyal, more polite and more considerate to the comrades, less capricious, etc. This circumstance may appear to be a negligible detail. But I think that from the standpoint of safeguards against a split and from the standpoint of what I wrote above about the relationship between Stalin and Trotsky it is not a detail, or it is a detail which can assume decisive importance.

*Lenin*

Taken down by L. F.

January 4, 1923



## III

Continuation of the notes.

December 26, 1922

The increase in the number of C.C. members to 50 or even 100 must, in my opinion, serve a double or even a treble purpose: the more members there are in the C.C., the more men will be trained in C.C. work and the less danger there will be of a split due to some indiscretion. The enlistment of many workers to the C.C. will help the workers to improve our administrative machinery, which is pretty bad. We inherited it, in effect, from the old regime, for it was absolutely impossible to reorganise it in such a short time, especially in conditions of war, famine, etc. That is why those "critics" who point to the defects of our administrative machinery out of mockery or malice may be calmly answered that they do not in the least understand the conditions of the revolution today. It is altogether impossible in five years to reorganise the machinery adequately, especially in the conditions in which our revolution took place. It is enough that in five years we have created a new type of state in which the workers are leading the peasants against the bourgeoisie; and in a hostile international environment this in itself is a gigantic achievement. But knowledge of this must on no account blind us to the fact that, in effect, we took over the old machinery of state from the tsar and the bourgeoisie and that now, with the onset of peace and the satisfaction of the minimum requirements against famine, all our work must be directed towards improving the administrative machinery.

I think that a few dozen workers, being members of the C.C., can deal better than anybody else with checking, improving and remodelling our state apparatus. The Workers' and Peasants' Inspection on whom this function devolved at the beginning proved unable to cope with it and can be used only as an "appendage" or, on certain conditions, as an assistant to these members of the C.C. In my opinion, the workers admitted to the Central Committee should come preferably not from among those who have had long service in Soviet bodies (in this part of my letter the term workers everywhere includes peasants), because those workers have already acquired the very traditions and the very prejudices which it is desirable to combat.

The working-class members of the C.C. must be mainly workers of a lower stratum than those promoted in the last five years to work in Soviet bodies; they must be people closer to being rank-and-file workers and peasants, who, however, do not fall into the category of direct or indirect exploiters. I think that by

attending all sittings of the C.C. and all sittings of the Political Bureau, and by reading all the documents of the C.C., such workers can form a staff of devoted supporters of the Soviet system, able, first, to give stability to the C.C. itself, and second, to work effectively on the renewal and improvement of the state apparatus.

*Lenin*

Taken down by L. F.  
December 26, 1922

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#### IV

Continuation of the notes.  
December 27, 1922

### GRANTING LEGISLATIVE FUNCTIONS TO THE STATE PLANNING COMMISSION<sup>1</sup>

This idea was suggested by Comrade Trotsky, it seems, quite a long time ago. I was against it at the time, because I thought that there would then be a fundamental lack of co-ordination in the system of our legislative institutions. But after closer consideration of the matter I find that in substance there is a sound idea in it, namely: the State Planning Commission stands somewhat apart from our legislative institutions, although, as a body of experienced people, experts, representatives of science and technology, it is actually in a better position to form a correct judgement of affairs.

However, we have so far proceeded from the principle that the State Planning Commission must provide the state with critically analysed material and the state institutions must decide state matters. I think that in the present situation, when affairs of state have become unusually complicated, when it is necessary time and again to settle questions of which some require the expert opinion of the members of the State Planning Commission and some do not, and, what is more, to settle matters which need the expert opinion of the State Planning Commission on some points but not on others—I think that we must now take a step towards extending the competence of the State Planning Commission.

I imagine that step to be such that the decisions of the State Planning Commission could not be rejected by ordinary procedure in Soviet bodies, but would need a special procedure to be

reconsidered. For example, the question should be submitted to a session of the All-Russia Central Executive Committee, prepared for reconsideration according to a special instruction, involving the drawing up, under special rules, of memoranda to examine whether the State Planning Commission decision is subject to reversal. Lastly, special time-limits should be set for the reconsideration of State Planning Commission decisions, etc.

In this respect I think we can and must accede to the wishes of Comrade Trotsky, but not in the sense that specifically any one of our political leaders, or the Chairman of the Supreme Economic Council, etc., should be Chairman of the State Planning Commission. I think that personal matters are at present too closely interwoven with the question of principle. I think that the attacks which are now made against the Chairman of the State Planning Commission, Comrade Krzhizhanovsky, and Comrade Pyatakov, his deputy, and which proceed along two lines, so that, on the one hand, we hear charges of extreme leniency, lack of independent judgement and lack of backbone, and, on the other, charges of excessive coarseness, drill-sergeant methods, lack of solid scientific background, etc.—I think these attacks express two sides of the question, exaggerating them to the extreme, and that in actual fact we need a skilful combination in the State Planning Commission of two types of character, of which one may be exemplified by Comrade Pyatakov and the other by Comrade Krzhizhanovsky.

I think that the State Planning Commission must be headed by a man who, on the one hand, has scientific education, namely, either technical or agronomic, with decades of experience in practical work in the field of technology or of agronomics. I think this man must possess not so much the qualities of an administrator as broad experience and the ability to enlist the services of other men.

*Lenin*

December 27, 1922  
Taken down by M.V.

## V

Continuation of the letter  
on the legislative nature  
of State Planning Commission decisions.  
December 28, 1922

I have noticed that some of our comrades who are able to exercise a decisive influence on the direction of state affairs, exaggerate the administrative side, which, of course, is necessary in its

time and place, but which should not be confused with the scientific side, with a grasp of the broad facts, the ability to recruit men, etc.

In every state institution, especially in the State Planning Commission, the combination of these two qualities is essential; and when Comrade Krzhizhanovsky told me that he had enlisted the services of Comrade Pyatakov for the Commission and had come to terms with him about the work, I, in consenting to this, on the one hand, entertained certain doubts and, on the other, sometimes hoped that we would thus get the combination of the two types of statesmen. To see whether those hopes are justified, we must now wait and consider the matter on the strength of somewhat longer experience, but in principle, I think, there can be no doubt that such a combination of temperaments and types (of men and qualities) is absolutely necessary for the correct functioning of state institutions. I think that here it is just as harmful to exaggerate "administrating" as it is to exaggerate anything at all. The chief of a state institution must possess a high degree of personal appeal and sufficiently solid scientific and technical knowledge to be able to check people's work. That much is basic. Without it the work cannot be done properly. On the other hand, it is very important that he should be capable of administering and should have a worthy assistant, or assistants, in the matter. The combination of these two qualities in one person will hardly be found, and it is hardly necessary.

*Lenin*

Taken down by L. F.  
December 28, 1922

## VI

Continuation of the notes on the State  
Planning Commission.  
December 29, 1922

The State Planning Commission is apparently developing in all respects into a commission of experts. Such an institution cannot be headed by anybody except a man with great experience and an all-round scientific education in technology. The administrative element must in essence be subsidiary. A certain independence and autonomy of the State Planning Commission is essential for the prestige of this scientific institution and depends on one thing, namely, the conscientiousness of its workers and

their conscientious desire to turn our plan of economic and social development into reality.

This last quality may, of course, be found now only as an exception, for the overwhelming majority of scientists, who naturally make up the Commission, are inevitably infected with bourgeois ideas and bourgeois prejudices. The check on them from this standpoint must be the job of several persons who can form the Presidium of the Commission. These must be Communists to keep a day-to-day check on the extent of the bourgeois scientists' devotion to our cause displayed in the whole course of the work and see that they abandon bourgeois prejudices and gradually adopt the socialist standpoint. This work along the twin lines of scientific checking and pure administration should be the ideal of those who run the State Planning Commission in our Republic.

*Lenin*

Taken down by M. V.  
December 29, 1922

Is it rational to divide the work of the State Planning Commission into separate jobs? Should we not, on the contrary, try to build up a group of permanent specialists who would be systematically checked by the Presidium of the Commission and could solve the whole range of problems within its ambit? I think that the latter would be the more reasonable and that we must try to cut down the number of temporary and urgent tasks.

*Lenin*

December 29, 1922  
Taken down by M. V.

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## VII

Continuation of the notes.  
December 29, 1922

### (ADDITION TO THE SECTION ON INCREASING THE NUMBER OF C.C. MEMBERS)

In increasing the number of its members, the C.C., I think, must also, and perhaps mainly, devote attention to checking and improving our administrative machinery, which is no good at all. For this we must enlist the services of highly qualified

specialists, and the task of supplying those specialists must devolve upon the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection

How are we to combine these checking specialists, people with adequate knowledge, and the new members of the C C? This problem must be resolved in practice

It seems to me that the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection (as a result of its development and of our perplexity about its development) has led all in all to what we now observe, namely, to an intermediary position between a special People's Commissariat and a special function of the members of the C C, between an institution that inspects anything and everything and an aggregate of not very numerous but first class inspectors, who must be well paid (this is especially indispensable in our age when everything must be paid for and inspectors are directly employed by the institutions that pay them better)

If the number of C C members is increased in the appropriate way and they go through a course of state management year after year with the help of highly qualified specialists and of members of the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection who are highly authoritative in every branch—then, I think we shall successfully solve this problem which we have not managed to do for such a long time

To sum up, 100 members of the C C at the most and not more than 400-500 assistants, members of the Workers and Peasants Inspection engaged in inspecting under their direction

*Lenin*

December 29, 1922  
Taken down by M. V.

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(Continuation of the notes  
December 30, 1922)

## THE QUESTION OF NATIONALITIES OR "AUTONOMISATION"<sup>212</sup>

I suppose I have been very remiss with respect to the workers of Russia for not having intervened energetically and decisively enough in the notorious question of autonomisation,<sup>21)</sup> which it appears, is officially called the question of the union of Soviet socialist republics

When this question arose last summer, I was ill, and then in

autumn I relied too much on my recovery and on the October and December plenary meetings giving me an opportunity of intervening in this question.<sup>294</sup> However, I did not manage to attend the October Plenary Meeting (when this question came up) or the one in December, and so the question passed me by almost completely.

I have only had time for a talk with Comrade Dzerzhinsky, who came from the Caucasus and told me how this matter stood in Georgia. I have also managed to exchange a few words with Comrade Zinoviev and express my apprehensions on this matter. From what I was told by Comrade Dzerzhinsky, who was at the head of the commission sent by the C.C. to "investigate" the Georgian incident, I could only draw the greatest apprehensions. If matters had come to such a pass that Orjonikidze could go to the extreme of applying physical violence, as Comrade Dzerzhinsky informed me, we can imagine what a mess we have got ourselves into. Obviously the whole business of "autonomisation" was radically wrong and badly timed.

It is said that a united apparatus was needed. Where did that assurance come from? Did it not come from that same Russian apparatus which, as I pointed out in one of the preceding sections of my diary, we took over from tsarism and slightly anointed with Soviet oil?<sup>\*</sup>

There is no doubt that that measure should have been delayed somewhat until we could say that we vouched for our apparatus as our own. But now, we must, in all conscience, admit the contrary; the apparatus we call ours is, in fact, still quite alien to us; it is a bourgeois and tsarist hotch-potch and there has been no possibility of getting rid of it in the course of the past five years without the help of other countries and because we have been "busy" most of the time with military engagements and the fight against famine.

It is quite natural that in such circumstances the "freedom to secede from the union" by which we justify ourselves will be a mere scrap of paper, unable to defend the non-Russians from the onslaught of that really Russian man, the Great-Russian chauvinist, in substance a rascal and a tyrant, such as the typical Russian bureaucrat is. There is no doubt that the infinitesimal percentage of Soviet and sovietised workers will drown in that tide of chauvinistic Great-Russian riff-raff like a fly in milk.

It is said in defence of this measure that the People's Commissariats directly concerned with national psychology and national education were set up as separate bodies. But there the question arises: can these People's Commissariats be made quite inde-

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<sup>\*</sup> See this volume, pp. 683-86.—*Ed.*

pendent? and secondly: were we careful enough to take measures to provide the non-Russians with a real safeguard against the truly Russian bully? I do not think we took such measures although we could and should have done so.

I think that Stalin's haste and his infatuation with pure administration, together with his spite against the notorious "nationalist-socialism", played a fatal role here. In politics spite generally plays the basest of roles.

I also fear that Comrade Dzerzhinsky, who went to the Caucasus to investigate the "crime" of those "nationalist-socialists", distinguished himself there by his truly Russian frame of mind (it is common knowledge that people of other nationalities who have become Russified overdo this Russian frame of mind) and that the impartiality of his whole commission was typified well enough by Orjonikidze's "manhandling". I think that no provocation or even insult can justify such Russian manhandling and that Comrade Dzerzhinsky was inexcusably guilty in adopting a light-hearted attitude towards it.

For all the citizens in the Caucasus Orjonikidze was the authority. Orjonikidze had no right to display that irritability to which he and Dzerzhinsky referred. On the contrary, Orjonikidze should have behaved with a restraint which cannot be demanded of any ordinary citizen, still less of a man accused of a "political" crime. And, to tell the truth, those nationalist-socialists were citizens who were accused of a political crime, and the terms of the accusation were such that it could not be described otherwise.

Here we have an important question of principle: how is internationalism to be understood?\*

*Lenin*

December 30, 1922

Taken down by M. V.

Continuation of the notes.

December 31, 1922

## THE QUESTION OF NATIONALITIES OR "AUTONOMISATION"

(CONTINUED)

In my writings on the national question I have already said that an abstract presentation of the question of nationalism in general

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\* After this the following phrase was crossed out in the shorthand text: "It seems to me that our comrades have not studied this important question of principle sufficiently."—*Ed.*



is of no use at all. A distinction must necessarily be made between the nationalism of an oppressor nation and that of an oppressed nation, the nationalism of a big nation and that of a small nation.

In respect of the second kind of nationalism we, nationals of a big nation, have nearly always been guilty, in historic practice, of an infinite number of cases of violence; furthermore, we commit violence and insult an infinite number of times without noticing it. It is sufficient to recall my Volga reminiscences of how non-Russians are treated; how the Poles are not called by any other name than Polyachishka, how the Tatar is nicknamed Prince, how the Ukrainians are always Khokhols and the Georgians and other Caucasian nationals always Kapkasians.

That is why internationalism on the part of oppressors or "great" nations, as they are called (though they are great only in their violence, only great as bullies), must consist not only in the observance of the formal equality of nations but even in an inequality of the oppressor nation, the great nation, that must make up for the inequality which obtains in actual practice. Anybody who does not understand this has not grasped the real proletarian attitude to the national question, he is still essentially petty bourgeois in his point of view and is, therefore, sure to descend to the bourgeois point of view.

What is important for the proletariat? For the proletariat it is not only important, it is absolutely essential that he should be assured that the non-Russians place the greatest possible trust in the proletarian class struggle. What is needed to ensure this? Not merely formal equality. In one way or another, by one's attitude or by concessions, it is necessary to compensate the non-Russians for the lack of trust, for the suspicion and the insults to which the government of the "dominant" nation subjected them in the past.

I think it is unnecessary to explain this to Bolsheviks, to Communists, in greater detail. And I think that in the present instance, as far as the Georgian nation is concerned, we have a typical case in which a genuinely proletarian attitude makes profound caution, thoughtfulness and a readiness to compromise a matter of necessity for us. The Georgian who is neglectful of this aspect of the question, or who carelessly flings about accusations of "nationalist-socialism" (whereas he himself is a real and true "nationalist-socialist", and even a vulgar Great-Russian bully), violates, in substance, the interests of proletarian class solidarity, for nothing holds up the development and strengthening of proletarian class solidarity so much as national injustice: "offended" nationals are not sensitive to anything so much as to the feeling of equality and the violation of this equality, if only

through negligence or jest—to the violation of that equality by their proletarian comrades. That is why in this case it is better to overdo rather than underdo the concessions and leniency towards the national minorities. That is why, in this case, the fundamental interest of proletarian solidarity, and consequently of the proletarian class struggle, requires that we never adopt a formal attitude to the national question, but always take into account the specific attitude of the proletarian of the oppressed (or small) nation towards the oppressor (or great) nation.

*Lenin*

Taken down by M. V.  
December 31, 1922

Continuation of the notes.  
December 31, 1922

What practical measures must be taken in the present situation?

*Firstly*, we must maintain and strengthen the union of socialist republics. Of this there can be no doubt. This measure is necessary for us and it is necessary for the world communist proletariat in its struggle against the world bourgeoisie and its defence against bourgeois intrigues.

*Secondly*, the union of socialist republics must be retained for its diplomatic apparatus. By the way, this apparatus is an exceptional component of our state apparatus. We have not allowed a single influential person from the old tsarist apparatus into it. All sections with any authority are composed of Communists. That is why it has already won for itself (this may be said boldly) the name of a reliable communist apparatus purged to an incomparably greater extent of the old tsarist, bourgeois and petty-bourgeois elements than that which we have had to make do with in other People's Commissariats.

*Thirdly*, exemplary punishment must be inflicted on Comrade Orjonikidze (I say this all the more regretfully as I am one of his personal friends and have worked with him abroad) and the investigation of all the material which Dzerzhinsky's commission has collected must be completed or started over again to correct the enormous mass of wrongs and biased judgements which it doubtlessly contains. The political responsibility for all this truly Great-Russian nationalist campaign must, of course, be laid on Stalin and Dzerzhinsky.

*Fourthly*, the strictest rules must be introduced on the use of the national language in the non-Russian republics of our union

and these rules must be checked with special care. There is no doubt that our apparatus being what it is, there is bound to be, on the pretext of unity in the railway service, unity in the fiscal service and so on, a mass of truly Russian abuses. Special ingenuity is necessary for the struggle against these abuses, not to mention special sincerity on the part of those who undertake this struggle. A detailed code will be required, and only the nationals living in the republic in question can draw it up at all successfully. And then we cannot be sure in advance that as a result of this work we shall not take a step backward at our next Congress of Soviets, i.e., retain the union of Soviet socialist republics only for military and diplomatic affairs, and in all other respects restore full independence to the individual People's Commissariats.

It must be borne in mind that the decentralisation of the People's Commissariats and the lack of co-ordination in their work as far as Moscow and other centres are concerned can be compensated sufficiently by Party authority, if it is exercised with sufficient prudence and impartiality; the harm that can result to our state from a lack of unification between the national apparatuses and the Russian apparatus is infinitely less than that which will be done not only to us, but to the whole International, and to the hundreds of millions of the peoples of Asia, which is destined to follow us on to the stage of history in the near future. It would be unpardonable opportunism if, on the eve of the debut of the East, just as it is awakening, we undermined our prestige with its peoples, even if only by the slightest crudity or injustice towards our own non-Russian nationalities. The need to rally against the imperialists of the West, who are defending the capitalist world, is one thing. There can be no doubt about that and it would be superfluous for me to speak about my unconditional approval of it. It is another thing when we ourselves lapse, even if only in trifles, into imperialist attitudes towards oppressed nationalities, thus undermining all our principled sincerity, all our principled defence of the struggle against imperialism. But the morrow of world history will be a day when the awakening peoples oppressed by imperialism are finally aroused and the decisive long and hard struggle for their liberation begins.

*Lenin*

December 31, 1922

Taken down by M. V.

## PAGES FROM A DIARY<sup>295</sup>

The recent publication of the report on literacy among the population of Russia, based on the census of 1920 (*Literacy in Russia*, issued by the Central Statistical Board, Public Education Section, Moscow, 1922), is a very important event.

Below I quote a table from this report on the state of literacy among the population of Russia in 1897 and 1920.

	Literates per thousand males		Literates per thousand females		Literates per thousand population	
	1897	1920	1897	1920	1897	1920
1 European Russia	326	422	136	255	229	330
2. North Caucasus	241	357	56	215	150	281
3 Siberia (Western)	170	307	46	134	108	218
<b>Overall average</b>	<b>318</b>	<b>409</b>	<b>131</b>	<b>244</b>	<b>223</b>	<b>319</b>

At a time when we hold forth on proletarian culture and the relation in which it stands to bourgeois culture, facts and figures reveal that we are in a very bad way even as far as bourgeois culture is concerned. As might have been expected, it appears that we are still a very long way from attaining universal literacy, and that even compared with tsarist times (1897) our progress has been far too slow. This should serve as a stern warning and reproach to those who have been soaring in the empyreal heights of "proletarian culture". It shows what a vast amount of urgent spade-work we still have to do to reach the standard of an ordinary West-European civilised country. It also shows

what a vast amount of work we have to do today to achieve, on the basis of our proletarian gains, anything like a real cultural standard.

We must not confine ourselves to this incontrovertible but too theoretical proposition. The very next time we revise our quarterly budget we must take this matter up in a practical way as well. In the first place, of course, we shall have to cut down the expenditure of government departments other than the People's Commissariat of Education, and the sums thus released should be assigned for the latter's needs. In a year like the present, when we are relatively well supplied, we must not be chary in increasing the bread ration for schoolteachers.

Generally speaking, it cannot be said that the work now being done in public education is too narrow. Quite a lot is being done to get the old teachers out of their rut, to attract them to the new problems, to rouse their interest in new methods of education, and in such problems as religion.

But we are not doing the main thing. We are not doing anything—or doing far from enough—to raise the schoolteacher to the level that is absolutely essential if we want any culture at all, proletarian or even bourgeois. We must bear in mind the semi-Asiatic ignorance from which we have not yet extricated ourselves, and from which we cannot extricate ourselves without strenuous effort—although we have every opportunity to do so, because nowhere are the masses of the people so interested in real culture as they are in our country; nowhere are the problems of this culture tackled so thoroughly and consistently as they are in our country; in no other country is state power in the hands of the working class which, in its mass, is fully aware of the deficiencies, I shall not say of its culture, but of its literacy; nowhere is the working class so ready to make, and nowhere is it actually making, such sacrifices to improve its position in this respect as in our country.

Too little, far too little, is still being done by us to adjust our state budget to satisfy, as a first measure, the requirements of elementary public education. Even in our People's Commissariat of Education we all too often find disgracefully inflated staffs in some state publishing establishment, which is contrary to the concept that the state's first concern should not be publishing houses but that there should be people to read, that the number of people able to read is greater, so that book publishing should have a wider political field in future Russia. Owing to the old (and bad) habit, we are still devoting much more time and effort to technical questions, such as the question of book publishing, than to the general political question of literacy among the people.

If we take the Central Vocational Education Board,<sup>296</sup> we are sure that there, too, we shall find far too much that is superfluous and inflated by departmental interests, much that is ill-adjusted to the requirements of broad public education. Far from everything that we find in the Central Vocational Education Board can be justified by the legitimate desire first of all to improve and give a practical slant to the education of our young factory workers. If we examine the staff of the Central Vocational Education Board carefully we shall find very much that is inflated and is in that respect fictitious and should be done away with. There is still very much in the proletarian and peasant state that can and must be economised for the purpose of promoting literacy among the people; this can be done by closing institutions which are playthings of a semi-aristocratic type, or institutions we can still do without and will be able to do without, and shall have to do without, for a long time to come, considering the state of literacy among the people as revealed by the statistics.

Our schoolteacher should be raised to a standard he has never achieved, and cannot achieve, in bourgeois society. This is a truism and requires no proof. We must strive for this state of affairs by working steadily, methodically and persistently to raise the teacher to a higher cultural level, to train him thoroughly for his really high calling and—mainly, mainly and mainly—to improve his position materially.

We must systematically step up our efforts to organise the schoolteachers so as to transform them from the bulwark of the bourgeois system that they still are in all capitalist countries without exception, into the bulwark of the Soviet system, in order, through their agency, to divert the peasantry from alliance with the bourgeoisie and to bring them into alliance with the proletariat.

I want briefly to emphasise the special importance in this respect of regular visits to the villages; such visits, it is true, are already being practised and should be regularly promoted. We should not stint money—which we all too often waste on the machinery of state that is almost entirely a product of the past historical epoch—on measures like these visits to the villages.

For the speech I was to have delivered at the Congress of Soviets in December 1922 I collected data on the patronage undertaken by urban workers over villagers. Part of these data was obtained for me by Comrade Khodorovsky, and since I have been unable to deal with this problem and give it publicity through the Congress. I submit the matter to the comrades for discussion now.

*Here we have a fundamental political question—the relations between town and country—which is of decisive importance for the whole of our revolution. While the bourgeois state methodically concentrates all its efforts on doping the urban workers, adapting all the literature published at state expense and at the expense of the tsarist and bourgeois parties for this purpose, we can and must utilise our political power to make the urban worker an effective vehicle of communist ideas among the rural proletariat.*

I said “communist”, but I hasten to make a reservation for fear of causing a misunderstanding, or of being taken too literally. Under no circumstances must this be understood to mean that we should immediately propagate purely and strictly communist ideas in the countryside. As long as our countryside lacks the material basis for communism, it will be, I should say, harmful, in fact, I should say, fatal, for communism to do so.

That is a fact. We must start by establishing contacts between town and country without the preconceived aim of implanting communism in the rural districts. It is an aim which cannot be achieved at the present time. It is inopportune, and to set an aim like that at the present time would be harmful, instead of useful, to the cause.

But it is our duty to establish contacts between the urban workers and the rural working people, to establish between them a form of comradeship which can easily be created. This is one of the fundamental tasks of the working class which holds power. To achieve this we must form a number of associations (Party, trade union and private) of factory workers, which would devote themselves regularly to assisting the villages in their cultural development.

Is it possible to “attach” all the urban groups to all the village groups, so that every working-class group may take advantage regularly of every opportunity, of every occasion to serve the cultural needs of the village group it is “attached” to? Or will it be possible to find other forms of contact? I here confine myself solely to formulating the question in order to draw the comrades’ attention to it, to point out the available experience of Western Siberia (to which Comrade Khodorovsky drew my attention) and to present this gigantic, historic cultural task in all its magnitude.

We are doing almost nothing for the rural districts outside our official budget or outside official channels. True, in our country the nature of the cultural relations between town and village is automatically and inevitably changing. Under capitalism the town introduced political, economic, moral, physical, etc., corruption into the countryside. In our case, towns are automati-

cally beginning to introduce the very opposite of this into the countryside. But, I repeat, all this is going on automatically, spontaneously, and can be improved (and later increased a hundredfold) by doing it consciously, methodically and systematically.

We shall begin to advance (and shall then surely advance a hundred times more quickly) only after we have studied the question, after we have formed all sorts of workers' organisations—doing everything to prevent them from becoming bureaucratic—to take up the matter, discuss it and get things done.

January 2, 1923

*Pravda* No. 2, January 4, 1923  
Signed *N. Lenin*

*Collected Works*, Vol 33,  
pp 462-66



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## ON CO-OPERATION<sup>297</sup>

### I

It seems to me that not enough attention is being paid to the co-operative movement in our country. Not everyone understands that now, since the time of the October Revolution and quite apart from NEP (on the contrary, in this connection we must say—because of NEP), our co-operative movement has become one of great significance. There is a lot of fantasy in the dreams of the old co-operators. Often they are ridiculously fantastic. But why are they fantastic? Because people do not understand the fundamental, the rock-bottom significance of the working-class political struggle for the overthrow of the rule of the exploiters. We have overthrown the rule of the exploiters, and much that was fantastic, even romantic, even banal in the dreams of the old co-operators is now becoming unvarnished reality.

Indeed, since political power is in the hands of the working class, since this political power owns all the means of production, the only task, indeed, that remains for us is to organise the population in co-operative societies. With most of the population organised in co-operatives, the socialism which in the past was legitimately treated with ridicule, scorn and contempt by those who were rightly convinced that it was necessary to wage the class struggle, the struggle for political power, etc., will achieve its aim automatically. But not all comrades realise how vastly, how infinitely important it is now to organise the population of Russia in co-operative societies. By adopting NEP we made a concession to the peasant as a trader, to the principle of private trade; it is precisely for this reason (contrary to what some people think) that the co-operative movement is of such immense importance. All we actually need under NEP is to organise the population of Russia in co-operative societies on a sufficiently large scale, for we have now found that degree of combination of

private interest, of private commercial interest, with state supervision and control of this interest, that degree of its subordination to the common interests which was formerly the stumbling-block for very many socialists. Indeed, the power of the state over all large-scale means of production, political power in the hands of the proletariat, the alliance of this proletariat with the many millions of small and very small peasants, the assured proletarian leadership of the peasantry, etc.—is this not all that is necessary to build a complete socialist society out of co-operatives, out of co-operatives alone, which we formerly ridiculed as huckstering and which from a certain aspect we have the right to treat as such now, under NEP? Is this not all that is necessary to build a complete socialist society? It is still not the building of socialist society, but it is all that is necessary and sufficient for it.

It is this very circumstance that is underestimated by many of our practical workers. They look down upon our co-operative societies, failing to appreciate their exceptional importance, first, from the standpoint of principle (the means of production are owned by the state), and, second, from the standpoint of transition to the new system by means that are the *simplest, easiest and most acceptable to the peasant*.

But this again is of fundamental importance. It is one thing to draw up fantastic plans for building socialism through all sorts of workers' associations, and quite another to learn to build socialism in practice in such a way that *every* small peasant could take part in it. That is the very stage we have now reached. And there is no doubt that, having reached it, we are taking too little advantage of it.

We went too far when we introduced NEP, but not because we attached too much importance to the principle of free enterprise and trade—we went too far because we lost sight of the co-operatives, because we now underrate the co-operatives, because we are already beginning to forget the vast importance of the co-operatives from the above two points of view.

I now propose to discuss with the reader what can and must at once be done practically on the basis of this "co-operative" principle. By what means can we, and must we, start at once to develop this "co-operative" principle so that its socialist meaning may be clear to all?

Co-operation must be politically organised that it will not only generally and always enjoy certain privileges, but that these privileges should be of a purely material nature (a favourable bank-rate, etc.). The co-operatives must be granted state loans that are greater, if only by a little, than the loans we grant to private enterprises, even to heavy industry. etc

A social system emerges only if it has the financial backing of a definite class. There is no need to mention the hundreds of millions of rubles that the birth of "free" capitalism cost. At present we have to realise that the co-operative system is the social system we must now give more than ordinary assistance, and we must actually give that assistance. But it must be assistance in the real sense of the word, i.e., it will not be enough to interpret it to mean assistance for any kind of co-operative trade; by assistance we must mean aid to co-operative trade in which *really large masses of the population actually take part*. It is certainly a correct form of assistance to give a bonus to peasants who take part in co-operative trade, but the whole point is to verify the nature of this participation, to verify the awareness behind it, and to verify its quality. Strictly speaking, when a co-operator goes to a village and opens a co-operative store, the people take no part in this whatever; but at the same time guided by their own interests they will hasten to try to take part in it.

There is another aspect to this question. From the point of view of the "enlightened" (primarily, literate) European there is not much left for us to do to induce absolutely everyone to take not a passive, but an active part in co-operative operations. Strictly speaking, there is "only" one thing we have left to do and that is to make our people so "enlightened" that they understand all the advantages of everybody participating in the work of the co-operatives, and organise this participation. "Only" that. There are now no other devices needed to advance to socialism. But to achieve this "only", there must be a veritable revolution—the entire people must go through a period of cultural development. Therefore, our rule must be: as little philosophising and as few acrobatics as possible. In this respect NEP is an advance, because it is adjustable to the level of the most ordinary peasant and does not demand anything higher of him. But it will take a whole historical epoch to get the entire population into the work of the co-operatives through NEP. At best we can achieve this in one or two decades. Nevertheless, it will be a distinct historical epoch, and without this historical epoch, without universal literacy, without a proper degree of efficiency, without training the population sufficiently to acquire the habit of book-reading, and without the material basis for this, without a certain sufficiency to safeguard against, say, bad harvests, famine, etc.—without this we shall not achieve our object. The thing now is to learn to combine the wide revolutionary range of action, the revolutionary enthusiasm which we have displayed, and displayed abundantly, and crowned with complete success—to learn to combine this with (I am almost inclined to say) the ability to

be an efficient and capable trader, which is quite enough to be a good co-operator. By ability to be a trader I mean the ability to be a cultured trader. Let those Russians, or peasants, who imagine that since they trade they are good traders, get that well into their heads. This does not follow at all. They do trade, but that is far from being cultured traders. They now trade in an Asiatic manner, but to be a good trader one must trade in the European manner. They are a whole epoch behind in that.

In conclusion: a number of economic, financial and banking privileges must be granted to the co-operatives—this is the way our socialist state must promote the new principle on which the population must be organised. But this is only the general outline of the task; it does not define and depict in detail the entire content of the practical task, i.e., we must find what form of “bonuses” to give for joining the co-operatives (and the terms on which we should give it), the form of bonus by which we shall assist the co-operatives sufficiently, the form of bonus that will produce the civilised co-operator. And given social ownership of the means of production, given the class victory of the proletariat over the bourgeoisie, the system of civilised co-operators is the system of socialism.

January 4, 1923

## II

Whenever I wrote about the New Economic Policy I always quoted the article on state capitalism which I wrote in 1918. This has more than once aroused doubts in the minds of certain young comrades. But their doubts were mainly on abstract political points.

It seemed to them that the term “state capitalism” could not be applied to a system under which the means of production were owned by the working class, a working class that held political power. They did not notice, however, that I used the term “state capitalism”, *firstly*, to connect historically our present position with the position adopted in my controversy with the so-called Left Communists; also, I argued at the time that state capitalism would be superior to our existing economy. It was important for me to show the continuity between ordinary state capitalism and the unusual, even very unusual, state capitalism to which

I referred in introducing the reader to the New Economic Policy. *Secondly*, the practical purpose was always important to me. And the practical purpose of our New Economic Policy was to lease out concessions. In the prevailing circumstances, concessions in our country would unquestionably have been a pure type of state capitalism. That is how I argued about state capitalism.

But there is another aspect of the matter for which we may need state capitalism, or at least a comparison with it. It is the question of co-operatives.

In the capitalist state, co-operatives are no doubt collective capitalist institutions. Nor is there any doubt that under our present economic conditions, when we combine private capitalist enterprises—but in no other way than on nationalised land and in no other way than under the control of the working-class state—with enterprises of a consistently socialist type (the means of production, the land on which the enterprises are situated, and the enterprises as a whole belonging to the state), the question arises about a third type of enterprise, the co-operatives, which were not formerly regarded as an independent type differing fundamentally from the others. Under private capitalism, co-operative enterprises differ from capitalist enterprises as collective enterprises differ from private enterprises. Under state capitalism, co-operative enterprises differ from state capitalist enterprises, firstly, because they are private enterprises, and, secondly, because they are collective enterprises. Under our present system, co-operative enterprises differ from private capitalist enterprises because they are collective enterprises, but do not differ from socialist enterprises if the land on which they are situated and the means of production belong to the state, i.e., the working class.

This circumstance is not considered sufficiently when co-operatives are discussed. It is forgotten that owing to the special features of our political system, our co-operatives acquire an altogether exceptional significance. If we exclude concessions, which, incidentally, have not developed on any considerable scale, co-operation under our conditions nearly always coincides fully with socialism.

Let me explain what I mean. Why were the plans of the old co-operators, from Robert Owen onwards, fantastic? Because they dreamed of peacefully remodelling contemporary society into socialism without taking account of such fundamental questions as the class struggle, the capture of political power by the working class, the overthrow of the rule of the exploiting class. That is why we are right in regarding as entirely fantastic this “co-operative” socialism, and as romantic, and even banal, the dream of

transforming class enemies into class collaborators and class war into class peace (so-called class truce) by merely organising the population in co-operative societies.

Undoubtedly we were right from the point of view of the fundamental task of the present day, for socialism cannot be established without a class struggle for political power in the state.

But see how things have changed now that political power is in the hands of the working class, now that the political power of the exploiters is overthrown and all the means of production (except those which the workers' state voluntarily abandons on specified terms and for a certain time to the exploiters in the form of concessions) are owned by the working class.

Now we are entitled to say that for us the mere growth of co-operation (with the "slight" exception mentioned above) is identical with the growth of socialism, and at the same time we have to admit that there has been a radical modification in our whole outlook on socialism. The radical modification is this, formerly we placed, and had to place, the main emphasis on the political struggle, on revolution, on winning political power, etc. Now the emphasis is changing and shifting to peaceful, organisational, "cultural" work. I should say that emphasis is shifting to educational work, were it not for our international relations, were it not for the fact that we have to fight for our position on a world scale. If we leave that aside, however, and confine ourselves to internal economic relations, the emphasis in our work is certainly shifting to education.

Two main tasks confront us, which constitute the epoch—to reorganise our machinery of state, which is utterly useless, and which we took over in its entirety from the preceding epoch, during the past five years of struggle we did not, and could not, drastically reorganise it. Our second task is educational work among the peasants. And the economic object of this educational work among the peasants is to organise the latter in co-operative societies. If the whole of the peasantry had been organised in co-operatives, we would by now have been standing with both feet on the soil of socialism. But the organisation of the entire peasantry in co-operative societies presupposes a standard of culture among the peasants (precisely among the peasants as the overwhelming mass) that cannot, in fact, be achieved without a cultural revolution.

Our opponents told us repeatedly that we were rash in undertaking to implant socialism in an insufficiently cultured country. But they were misled by our having started from the opposite end to that prescribed by theory (the theory of pedants of all kinds), because in our country the political and social revolu-

tion preceded the cultural revolution, that very cultural revolution which nevertheless now confronts us.

This cultural revolution would now suffice to make our country a completely socialist country; but it presents immense difficulties of a purely cultural (for we are illiterate) and material character (for to be cultured we must achieve a certain development of the material means of production, must have a certain material base).

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# OUR REVOLUTION

(APROPOS OF N. SUKHANOV'S NOTES<sup>288</sup>)

## I

I have lately been glancing through Sukhanov's notes on the revolution. What strikes one most is the pedantry of all our petty-bourgeois democrats and of all the heroes of the Second International. Apart from the fact that they are all extremely faint-hearted, that when it comes to the minutest deviation from the German model even the best of them fortify themselves with reservations—apart from this characteristic, which, is common to all petty-bourgeois democrats and has been abundantly manifested by them throughout the revolution, what strikes one is their slavish imitation of the past.

They all call themselves Marxists, but their conception of Marxism is impossibly pedantic. They have completely failed to understand what is decisive in Marxism, namely, its revolutionary dialectics. They have even absolutely failed to understand Marx's plain statements that in times of revolution the utmost flexibility<sup>289</sup> is demanded, and have even failed to notice, for instance, the statements Marx made in his letters—I think it was in 1856—expressing the hope of combining a peasant war in Germany, which might create a revolutionary situation, with the working-class movement<sup>30</sup>—they avoid even this plain statement and walk round and about it like a cat around a bowl of hot porridge.

Their conduct betrays them as cowardly reformists who are afraid to deviate from the bourgeoisie, let alone break with it, and at the same time they disguise their cowardice with the wildest rhetoric and braggartry. But what strikes one in all of them even from the purely theoretical point of view is their utter inability to grasp the following Marxist considerations: up to now they have seen capitalism and bourgeois democracy in Western Europe follow a definite path of development, and cannot conceive that this path can be taken as a model only *mutatis mutan-*



*dis*, only with certain amendments (quite insignificant from the standpoint of the general development of world history).

*First*—the revolution connected with the first imperialist world war. Such a revolution was bound to reveal new features, or variations, resulting from the war itself, for the world has never seen such a war in such a situation. We find that since the war the bourgeoisie of the wealthiest countries have to this day been unable to restore “normal” bourgeois relations. Yet our reformists—petty bourgeois who make a show of being revolutionaries—believed, and still believe, that normal bourgeois relations are the limit (thus far shalt thou go and no farther). And even their conception of “normal” is extremely stereotyped and narrow.

*Secondly*, they are complete strangers to the idea that while the development of world history as a whole follows general laws it is by no means precluded, but, on the contrary, presumed, that certain periods of development may display peculiarities in either the form or the sequence of this development. For instance, it does not even occur to them that because Russia stands on the border-line between the civilised countries and the countries which this war has for the first time definitely brought into the orbit of civilisation—all the Oriental, non-European countries—she could and was, indeed, bound to reveal certain distinguishing features; although these, of course, are in keeping with the general line of world development, they distinguish her revolution from those which took place in the West-European countries and introduce certain partial innovations as the revolution moves on to the countries of the East.

Infinitely stereotyped, for instance, is the argument they learned by rote during the development of West-European Social-Democracy, namely, that we are not yet ripe for socialism, that, as certain “learned” gentlemen among them put it, the objective economic premises for socialism do not exist in our country. It does not occur to any of them to ask: but what about a people that found itself in a revolutionary situation such as that created during the first imperialist war? Might it not, influenced by the hopelessness of its situation, fling itself into a struggle that would offer it at least some chance of securing conditions for the further development of civilisation that were somewhat unusual?

“The development of the productive forces of Russia has not attained the level that makes socialism possible.” All the heroes of the Second International, including, of course, Sukhanov, beat the drums about this proposition. They keep harping on this incontrovertible proposition in a thousand different keys, and think that it is the decisive criterion of our revolution.

But what if the situation, which drew Russia into the imperialist world war that involved every more or less influential West-

European country and made her a witness of the eve of the revolutions maturing or partly already begun in the East, gave rise to circumstances that put Russia and her development in a position which enabled us to achieve precisely that combination of a 'peasant war' with the working-class movement suggested in 1856 by no less a Marxist than Marx himself as a possible prospect for Prussia?

What if the complete hopelessness of the situation by stimulating the efforts of the workers and peasants tenfold, offered us the opportunity to create the fundamental requisites of civilisation in a different way from that of the West-European countries? Has that altered the general line of development of world history? Has that altered the basic relations between the basic classes of all the countries that are being or have been, drawn into the general course of world history?

If a definite level of culture is required for the building of socialism (although nobody can say just what that definite "level of culture" is, for it differs in every West European country) why cannot we begin by first achieving the prerequisites for that definite level of culture in a revolutionary way and *then*, with the aid of the workers and peasants government and the Soviet system proceed to overtake the other nations?

January 16 1923

## II

You say that civilisation is necessary for the building of socialism. Very good. But why could we not first create such prerequisites of civilisation in our country as the expulsion of the landowners and the Russian capitalists and then start moving towards socialism? Where in what books have you read that such variations of the customary historical sequence of events are impermissible or impossible?

Napoleon I think wrote *On s'engage et puis on voit*. Rendered freely this means "First engage in a serious battle and then see what happens." Well we did first engage in a serious battle in October 1917 and then saw such details of development (from the standpoint of world history they were certainly details) as the Brest peace the New Economic Policy, and so forth. And now there can be no doubt that in the main we have been victorious.

On Sukhanovs, not to mention Social Democrats still farther to the right, never even dream that revolutions cannot be made in any other way. Our European philistines never even dream that

the subsequent revolutions in Oriental countries, which possess much vaster populations and a much vaster diversity of social conditions, will undoubtedly display even greater distinctions than the Russian revolution.

It need hardly be said that a textbook written on Kautskian lines was a very useful thing in its day. But it is time, for all that, to abandon the idea that it foresaw all the forms of development of subsequent world history. It would be timely to say that those who think so are simply fools.

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## HOW WE SHOULD REORGANISE THE WORKERS' AND PEASANTS' INSPECTION

(RECOMMENDATION TO THE TWELFTH PARTY CONGRESS)<sup>201</sup>

It is beyond question that the Workers' and Peasants Inspection is an enormous difficulty for us, and that so far this difficulty has not been overcome. I think that the comrades who try to overcome the difficulty by denying that the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection is useful and necessary are wrong. But I do not deny that the problem presented by our state apparatus and the task of improving it is very difficult, that it is far from being solved, and is an extremely urgent one.

With the exception of the People's Commissariat of Foreign Affairs, our state apparatus is to a considerable extent a survival of the past and has undergone hardly any serious change. It has only been slightly touched up on the surface, but in all other respects it is a most typical relic of our old state machine. And so, to find a method of really renovating it, I think we ought to turn for experience to our Civil War.

How did we act in the more critical moments of the Civil War?

We concentrated our best Party forces in the Red Army; we mobilised the best of our workers; we looked for new forces at the deepest roots of our dictatorship.

I am convinced that we must go to the same source to find the means of reorganising the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection. I recommend that our Twelfth Party Congress adopt the following plan of reorganisation, based on some enlargement of our Central Control Commission.

The Plenary Meetings of the Central Committee of our Party are already revealing a tendency to develop into a kind of supreme Party conference. They take place, on the average, not more than once in two months, while the routine work is con

ducted, as we know, on behalf of the Central Committee by our Political Bureau, our Organising Bureau, our Secretariat, and so forth. I think we ought to follow the road we have thus taken to the end and definitely transform the Plenary Meetings of the Central Committee into supreme Party conferences convened once in two months jointly with the Central Control Commission. The Central Control Commission should be amalgamated with the main body of the reorganised Workers' and Peasants' Inspection on the following lines.

I propose that the Congress should elect 75 to 100 new members to the Central Control Commission. They should be workers and peasants, and should go through the same Party screening as ordinary members of the Central Committee, because they are to enjoy the same rights as the members of the Central Committee.

On the other hand, the staff of the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection should be reduced to three or four hundred persons, specially screened for conscientiousness and knowledge of our state apparatus. They must also undergo a special test as regards their knowledge of the principles of scientific organisation of labour in general, and of administrative work, office work, and so forth, in particular.

In my opinion, such an amalgamation of the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection with the Central Control Commission will be beneficial to both these institutions. On the one hand, the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection will thus obtain such high authority that it will certainly not be inferior to the People's Commissariat of Foreign Affairs. On the other hand, our Central Committee, together with the Central Control Commission, will definitely take the road of becoming a supreme Party conference, which in fact it has already taken, and along which it should proceed to the end so as to be able to fulfil its functions properly in two respects: in respect to *its own* methodical, expedient and systematic organisation and work, and in respect to maintaining contacts with the broad masses through the medium of the best of our workers and peasants.

I foresee an objection that, directly or indirectly, may come from those spheres which make our state apparatus antiquated, i.e., from those who urge that its present utterly impossible, indecently pre-revolutionary form be preserved (incidentally, we now have an opportunity which rarely occurs in history of ascertaining the period necessary for bringing about radical social changes; we now see clearly *what* can be done in five years, and what requires much more time).

The objection I foresee is that the change I propose will lead to nothing but chaos. The members of the Central Control Com-

mission will wander around all the institutions, not knowing where, why or to whom to apply, causing disorganisation everywhere and distracting employees from their routine work, etc., etc.

I think that the malicious source of this objection is so obvious that it does not warrant a reply. It goes without saying that the Presidium of the Central Control Commission, the People's Commissar of the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection and his collegium (and also, in the proper cases, the Secretariat of our Central Committee) will have to put in years of persistent effort to get the Commissariat properly organised, and to get it to function smoothly in conjunction with the Central Control Commission. In my opinion, the People's Commissar of the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection, as well as the whole collegium, can (and should) remain and guide the work of the entire Workers' and Peasants' Inspection, including the work of all the members of the Central Control Commission who will be "placed under his command". The three or four hundred employees of the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection that are to remain, according to my plan, should, on the one hand, perform purely secretarial functions for the other members of the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection and for the supplementary members of the Central Control Commission; and, on the other hand, they should be highly skilled, specially screened, particularly reliable, and highly paid, so that they may be relieved of their present truly unhappy (to say the least) position of Workers' and Peasants' Inspection officials.

I am sure that the reduction of the staff to the number I have indicated will greatly enhance the efficiency of the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection personnel and the quality of all its work, enabling the People's Commissar and the members of the collegium to concentrate their efforts entirely on organising work and on systematically and steadily improving its efficiency, which is so absolutely essential for our workers' and peasants' government, and for our Soviet system.

On the other hand, I also think that the People's Commissar of the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection should work on partly amalgamating and partly co-ordinating those higher institutions for the organisation of labour (the Central Institute of Labour, the Institute for the Scientific Organisation of Labour, etc.), of which there are now no fewer than twelve in our Republic. Excessive uniformity and a consequent desire to amalgamate will be harmful. On the contrary, what is needed here is a reasonable and expedient mean between amalgamating all these institutions and properly delimiting them, allowing for a certain independence for each of them.

Our own Central Committee will undoubtedly gain no less from this reorganisation than the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection. It will gain because its contacts with the masses will be greater and because the regularity and effectiveness of its work will improve. It will then be possible (and necessary) to institute a stricter and more responsible procedure of preparing for the meetings of the Political Bureau, which should be attended by a definite number of members of the Central Control Commission determined either for a definite period or by some organisational plan.

In distributing work to the members of the Central Control Commission, the People's Commissar of the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection, in conjunction with the Presidium of the Central Control Commission, should impose on them the duty either of attending the meetings of the Political Bureau for the purpose of examining all the documents appertaining to matters that come before it in one way or another; or of devoting their working time to theoretical study, to the study of scientific methods of organising labour; or of taking a practical part in the work of supervising and improving our machinery of state, from the higher state institutions to the lower local bodies, etc.

I also think that in addition to the political advantages accruing from the fact that the members of the Central Committee and the Central Control Commission will, as a consequence of this reform, be much better informed and better prepared for the meetings of the Political Bureau (all the documents relevant to the business to be discussed at these meetings should be sent to all the members of the Central Committee and the Central Control Commission not later than the day before the meeting of the Political Bureau, except in absolutely urgent cases, for which special methods of informing the members of the Central Committee and the Central Control Commission and of settling these matters must be devised), there will also be the advantage that the influence of purely personal and incidental factors in our Central Committee will diminish, and this will reduce the danger of a split.

Our Central Committee has grown into a strictly centralised and highly authoritative group, but the conditions under which this group is working are not commensurate with its authority. The reform I recommend should help to remove this defect, and the members of the Central Control Commission, whose duty it will be to attend all meetings of the Political Bureau in a definite number, will have to form a compact group which should not allow anybody's authority without exception, neither that of the General Secretary nor of any other member of the Central Committee, to prevent them from putting questions, verifying

documents, and, in general, from keeping themselves fully informed of all things and from exercising the strictest control over the proper conduct of affairs.

Of course, in our Soviet Republic, the social order is based on the collaboration of two classes: the workers and peasants, in which the "Nepmen", i.e., the bourgeoisie, are now permitted to participate on certain terms. If serious class disagreements arise between these classes, a split will be inevitable. But the grounds for such a split are not inevitable in our social system, and it is the principal task of our Central Committee and Central Control Commission, as well as of our Party as a whole, to watch very closely over such circumstances as may cause a split, and to forestall them, for in the final analysis the fate of our Republic will depend on whether the peasant masses will stand by the working class, loyal to their alliance, or whether they will permit the "Nepmen", i.e., the new bourgeoisie, to drive a wedge between them and the working class, to split them off from the working class. The more clearly we see this alternative, the more clearly all our workers and peasants understand it, the greater are the chances that we shall avoid a split, which would be fatal for the Soviet Republic.

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Signed: *N. Lenin*

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## BETTER FEWER, BUT BETTER

In the matter of improving our state apparatus, the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection should not, in my opinion, either strive after quantity or hurry. We have so far been able to devote so little thought and attention to the efficiency of our state apparatus that it would now be quite legitimate if we took special care to secure its thorough organisation, and concentrated in the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection a staff of workers really abreast of the times, i.e., not inferior to the best West-European standards. For a socialist republic this condition is, of course, too modest. But our experience of the first five years has fairly crammed our heads with mistrust and scepticism. These qualities assert themselves involuntarily when, for example, we hear people dilating at too great length and too flippantly on "proletarian" culture. For a start, we should be satisfied with real bourgeois culture; for a start, we should be glad to dispense with the cruder types of pre-bourgeois culture, i.e., bureaucratic culture or serf culture, etc. In matters of culture, haste and sweeping measures are most harmful. Many of our young writers and Communists should get this well into their heads.

Thus, in the matter of our state apparatus we should now draw the conclusion from our past experience that it would be better to proceed more slowly.

Our state apparatus is so deplorable, not to say wretched, that we must first think very carefully how to combat its defects, bearing in mind that these defects are rooted in the past, which, although it has been overthrown, has not yet been overcome, has not yet reached the stage of a culture that has receded into the distant past. I say culture deliberately, because in these matters we can only regard as achieved what has become part and parcel of our culture, of our social life, our habits. We might say that the good in our social system has not been properly

studied, understood, and taken to heart; it has been hastily grasped at; it has not been verified or tested, corroborated by experience, and not made durable, etc. Of course, it could not be otherwise in a revolutionary epoch, when development proceeded at such breakneck speed that in a matter of five years we passed from tsarism to the Soviet system.

It is time we did something about it. We must show sound scepticism for too rapid progress, for boastfulness, etc. We must give thought to testing the steps forward we proclaim every hour, take every minute and then prove every second that they are flimsy, superficial and misunderstood. The most harmful thing here would be haste. The most harmful thing would be to rely on the assumption that we know at least something, or that we have any considerable number of elements necessary for the building of a really new state apparatus, one really worthy to be called socialist, Soviet, etc.

No, we are ridiculously deficient of such an apparatus, and even of the elements of it, and we must remember that we should not stint time on building it, and that it will take many, many years.

What elements have we for building this apparatus? Only two. First, the workers who are absorbed in the struggle for socialism. These elements are not sufficiently educated. They would like to build a better apparatus for us, but they do not know how. They cannot build one. They have not yet developed the culture required for this; and it is culture that is required. Nothing will be achieved in this by doing things in a rush, by assault, by vim or vigour, or in general, by any of the best human qualities. Secondly, we have elements of knowledge, education and training, but they are ridiculously inadequate compared with all other countries.

Here we must not forget that we are too prone to compensate (or imagine that we can compensate) our lack of knowledge by zeal, haste, etc.

In order to renovate our state apparatus we must at all costs set out, first, to learn, secondly, to learn, and thirdly, to learn, and then see to it that learning shall not remain a dead letter, or a fashionable catch-phrase (and we should admit in all frankness that this happens very often with us), that learning shall really become part of our very being, that it shall actually and fully become a constituent element of our social life. In short, we must not make the demands that are made by bourgeois Western Europe, but demands that are fit and proper for a country which has set out to develop into a socialist country.

The conclusions to be drawn from the above are the following: we must make the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection a

really exemplary institution, an instrument to improve our state apparatus.

In order that it may attain the desired high level, we must follow the rule: "Measure your cloth seven times before you cut."

For this purpose, we must utilise the very best of what there is in our social system, and utilise it with the greatest caution, thoughtfulness and knowledge, to build up the new People's Commissariat.

For this purpose, the best elements that we have in our social system—such as, first, the advanced workers, and, second, the really enlightened elements for whom we can vouch that they will not take the word for the deed, and will not utter a single word that goes against their conscience—should not shrink from admitting any difficulty and should not shrink from any struggle in order to achieve the object they have seriously set themselves.

We have been bustling for five years trying to improve our state apparatus, but it has been mere bustle, which has proved useless in these five years, or even futile, or even harmful. This bustle created the impression that we were doing something, but in effect it was only clogging up our institutions and our brains.

It is high time things were changed.

We must follow the rule: Better fewer, but better. We must follow the rule: Better get good human material in two or even three years than work in haste without hope of getting any at all.

I know that it will be hard to keep to this rule and apply it under our conditions. I know that the opposite rule will force its way through a thousand loopholes. I know that enormous resistance will have to be put up, that devilish persistence will be required, that in the first few years at least work in this field will be hellishly hard. Nevertheless, I am convinced that only by such effort shall we be able to achieve our aim; and that only by achieving this aim shall we create a republic that is really worthy of the name of Soviet, socialist, and so on, and so forth.

Many readers probably thought that the figures I quoted by way of illustration in my first article\* were too small. I am sure that many calculations may be made to prove that they are. But I think that we must put one thing above all such and other calculations, i.e., our desire to obtain really exemplary quality.

I think that the time has at last come when we must work in real earnest to improve our state apparatus and in this there can scarcely be anything more harmful than haste. That is why I would sound a strong warning against inflating the figures. In my opinion, we should, on the contrary, be especially sparing with fig-

\* See this volume, pp. 709-13 —Ed.

ures in this matter. Let us say frankly that the People's Commissariat of the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection does not at present enjoy the slightest authority. Everybody knows that no other institutions are worse organised than those of our Workers' and Peasants' Inspection, and that under present conditions nothing can be expected from this People's Commissariat. We must have this firmly fixed in our minds if we really want to create within a few years an institution that will, first, be an exemplary institution, secondly, win everybody's absolute confidence, and, thirdly, prove to all and sundry that we have really justified the work of such a highly placed institution as the Central Control Commission. In my opinion, we must immediately and irrevocably reject all general figures for the size of office staffs. We must select employees for the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection with particular care and only on the basis of the strictest test. Indeed, what is the use of establishing a People's Commissariat which carries on anyhow, which does not enjoy the slightest confidence, and whose word carries scarcely any weight? I think that our main object in launching the work of reconstruction that we now have in mind is to avoid all this.

The workers whom we are enlisting as members of the Central Control Commission must be irreproachable Communists, and I think that a great deal has yet to be done to teach them the methods and objects of their work. Furthermore, there must be a definite number of secretaries to assist in this work, who must be put to a triple test before they are appointed to their posts. Lastly, the officials whom in exceptional cases we shall accept directly as employees of the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection must conform to the following requirements:

First, they must be recommended by several Communists.

Second, they must pass a test for knowledge of our state apparatus.

Third, they must pass a test in the fundamentals of the theory of our state apparatus, in the fundamentals of management, office routine, etc.

Fourth, they must work in such close harmony with the members of the Central Control Commission and with their own secretariat that we could vouch for the work of the whole apparatus.

I know that these requirements are extraordinarily strict, and I am very much afraid that the majority of the "practical" workers in the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection will say that these requirements are impracticable, or will scoff at them. But I ask any of the present chiefs of the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection, or anyone associated with that body, whether they can honestly tell me the practical purpose of a People's Commissariat like the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection. I think this

question will help them recover their sense of proportion. Either it is not worth while having another of the numerous reorganisations that we have had of this hopeless affair, the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection, or we must really set to work, by slow, difficult and unusual methods, and by testing these methods over and over again, to create something really exemplary, something that will win the respect of all and sundry for its merits, and not only because of its rank and title.

If we do not arm ourselves with patience, if we do not devote several years to this task, we had better not tackle it at all.

In my opinion we ought to select a minimum number of the higher labour research institutes, etc., which we have baked so hastily, see whether they are organised properly, and allow them to continue working, but only in a way that conforms to the high standards of modern science and gives us all its benefits. If we do that it will not be utopian to hope that within a few years we shall have an institution that will be able to perform its functions, to work systematically and steadily on improving our state apparatus, an institution backed by the trust of the working class, of the Russian Communist Party, and the whole population of our Republic.

The spade-work for this could be begun at once. If the People's Commissariat of the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection accepted the present plan of reorganisation, it could now take preparatory steps and work methodically until the task is completed, without haste, and not hesitating to alter what has already been done.

Any half-hearted solution would be extremely harmful in this matter. A measure for the size of the staff of the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection based on any other consideration would, in fact, be based on the old bureaucratic considerations, on old prejudices, on what has already been condemned, universally ridiculed, etc.

In substance, the matter is as follows:

Either we prove now that we have really learned something about state organisation (we ought to have learned something in five years), or we prove that we are not sufficiently mature for it. If the latter is the case, we had better not tackle the task.

I think that with the available human material it will not be immodest to assume that we have learned enough to be able systematically to rebuild at least one People's Commissariat. True, this one People's Commissariat will have to be the model for our entire state apparatus.

We ought at once to announce a contest in the compilation of two or more textbooks on the organisation of labour in general, and on management in particular. We can take as a basis

the book already published by Yermansky, although it should be said in parentheses that he obviously sympathises with Menshevism and is unfit to compile textbooks for the Soviet system. We can also take as a basis the recent book by Kerzhentsev,<sup>102</sup> and some of the other partial textbooks available may be useful too.

We ought to send several qualified and conscientious people to Germany, or to Britain, to collect literature and to study this question. I mention Britain in case it is found impossible to send people to the U.S.A. or Canada.

We ought to appoint a commission to draw up the preliminary programme of examinations for prospective employees of the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection; ditto for candidates to the Central Control Commission.

These and similar measures will not, of course, cause any difficulties for the People's Commissar or the collegium of the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection, or for the Presidium of the Central Control Commission.

Simultaneously, a preparatory commission should be appointed to select candidates for membership of the Central Control Commission. I hope that we shall now be able to find more than enough candidates for this post among the experienced workers in all departments, as well as among the students of our Soviet higher schools. It would hardly be right to exclude one or another category beforehand. Probably preference will have to be given to a mixed composition for this institution, which should combine many qualities, and dissimilar merits. Consequently, the task of drawing up the list of candidates will entail a considerable amount of work. For example, it would be least desirable for the staff of the new People's Commissariat to consist of people of one type, only of officials say, or for it to exclude people of the propagandist type, or people whose principal quality is sociability or the ability to penetrate into circles that are not altogether customary for officials in this field. etc.

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I think I shall be able to express my idea best if I compare my plan with that of academic institutions. Under the guidance of their Presidium, the members of the Central Control Commission should systematically examine all the papers and documents of the Political Bureau. Moreover, they should divide their time correctly between various jobs in investigating the routine in our institutions, from the very small and privately-owned offices to the highest state institutions. And lastly, their functions should include the study of theory, i.e., the theory of organisa-

tion of the work they intend to devote themselves to, and practical work under the guidance either of older comrades or of teachers in the higher institutes for the organisation of labour.

I do not think, however, that they will be able to confine themselves to this sort of academic work. In addition, they will have to prepare themselves for work which I would not hesitate to call training to catch, I will not say rogues, but something like that, and working out special ruses to screen their movements, their approach, etc.

If such proposals were made in West-European government institutions they would rouse frightful resentment, a feeling of moral indignation, etc.; but I trust that we have not become so bureaucratic as to be capable of that. NEP has not yet succeeded in gaining such respect as to cause any of us to be shocked at the idea that somebody may be caught. Our Soviet Republic is of such recent construction, and there are such heaps of the old lumber still lying around that it would hardly occur to anyone to be shocked at the idea that we should delve into them by means of ruses, by means of investigations sometimes directed to rather remote sources or in a roundabout way. And even if it did occur to anyone to be shocked by this, we may be sure that such a person would make himself a laughing-stock.

Let us hope that our new Workers' and Peasants' Inspection will abandon what the French call *pruderie*, which we may call ridiculous primness, or ridiculous swank, and which plays entirely into the hands of our Soviet and Party bureaucracy. Let it be said in parentheses that we have bureaucrats in our Party offices as well as in Soviet offices.

When I said above that we must study and study hard in institutes for the higher organisation of labour, etc., I did not by any means imply "studying" in the schoolroom way, nor did I confine myself to the idea of studying only in the schoolroom way. I hope that not a single genuine revolutionary will suspect me of refusing, in this case, to understand "studies" to include resorting to some semi-humorous trick, cunning device, piece of trickery or something of that sort. I know that in the staid and earnest states of Western Europe such an idea would horrify people and that not a single decent official would even entertain it. I hope, however, that we have not yet become as bureaucratic as all that and that in our midst the discussion of this idea will give rise to nothing more than amusement.

Indeed, why not combine pleasure with utility? Why not resort to some humorous or semi-humorous trick to expose something ridiculous, something harmful, something semi-ridiculous, semi-harmful, etc.?

It seems to me that our Workers' and Peasants' Inspection

will gain a great deal if it undertakes to examine these ideas, and that the list of cases in which our Central Control Commission and its colleagues in the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection achieved a few of their most brilliant victories will be enriched by not a few exploits of our future Workers' and Peasants' Inspection and Central Control Commission members in places not quite mentionable in prim and staid textbooks.

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How can a Party institution be amalgamated with a Soviet institution? Is there not something improper in this suggestion?

I do not ask these questions on my own behalf, but on behalf of those I hinted at above when I said that we have bureaucrats in our Party institutions as well as in the Soviet institutions.

But why, indeed, should we not amalgamate the two if this is in the interests of our work? Do we not all see that such an amalgamation has been very beneficial in the case of the People's Commissariat of Foreign Affairs where it was brought about at the very beginning? Does not the Political Bureau discuss from the Party point of view many questions, both minor and important, concerning the "moves" we should make in reply to the "moves" of foreign powers in order to forestall their, say, cunning, if we are not to use a less respectable term? Is not this flexible amalgamation of a Soviet institution with a Party institution a source of great strength in our politics? I think that what has proved its usefulness, what has been definitely adopted in our foreign politics and has become so customary that it no longer calls forth any doubt in this field, will be at least as appropriate (in fact, I think it will be much more appropriate) for our state apparatus as a whole. The functions of the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection cover our state apparatus as a whole, and its activities should affect all and every state institution without exception: local, central, commercial, purely administrative, educational, archive, theatrical, etc.—in short, all without any exception.

Why then should not an institution, whose activities have such wide scope, and which moreover requires such extraordinary flexibility of forms, be permitted to adopt this peculiar amalgamation of a Party control institution with a Soviet control institution?

I see no obstacles to this. What is more, I think that such an amalgamation is the only guarantee of success in our work. I think that all doubts on this score arise in the dustiest corners of our government offices, and that they deserve to be treated with nothing but ridicule.



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Another doubt: is it expedient to combine educational activities with official activities? I think that it is not only expedient, but necessary. Generally speaking, in spite of our revolutionary attitude towards the West-European form of state, we have allowed ourselves to become infected with a number of its most harmful and ridiculous prejudices; to some extent we have been deliberately infected with them by our dear bureaucrats, who counted on being able again and again to fish in the muddy waters of these prejudices. And they did fish in these muddy waters to so great an extent that only the blind among us failed to see how extensively this fishing was practised.

In all spheres of social, economic and political relationships we are "frightfully" revolutionary. But as regards precedence, the observance of the forms and rites of office management, our "revolutionariness" often gives way to the mustiest routine. On more than one occasion, we have witnessed the very interesting phenomenon of a great leap forward in social life being accompanied by amazing timidity whenever the slightest changes are proposed.

This is natural, for the boldest steps forward were taken in a field which was long reserved for theoretical study, which was promoted mainly, and even almost exclusively, in theory. The Russian, when away from work, found solace from bleak bureaucratic realities in unusually bold theoretical constructions, and that is why in our country these unusually bold theoretical constructions assumed an unusually lopsided character. Theoretical audacity in general constructions went hand in hand with amazing timidity as regards certain very minor reforms in office routine. Some great universal agrarian revolution was worked out with an audacity unexampled in any other country, and at the same time the imagination failed when it came to working out a tenth-rate reform in office routine; the imagination, or patience, was lacking to apply to this reform the general propositions that produced such brilliant results when applied to general problems.

That is why in our present life reckless audacity goes hand in hand, to an astonishing degree, with timidity of thought even when it comes to very minor changes.

I think that this has happened in all really great revolutions, for really great revolutions grow out of the contradictions between the old, between what is directed towards developing the old, and the very abstract striving for the new, which must be so new as not to contain the tiniest particle of the old.

And the more abrupt the revolution, the longer will many of these contradictions last.

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The general feature of our present life is the following: we have destroyed capitalist industry and have done our best to raze to the ground the medieval institutions and landed proprietorship, and thus created a small and very small peasantry, which is following the lead of the proletariat because it believes in the results of its revolutionary work. It is not easy for us, however, to keep going until the socialist revolution is victorious in more developed countries merely with the aid of this confidence, because economic necessity, especially under NEP, keeps the productivity of labour of the small and very small peasants at an extremely low level. Moreover, the international situation, too, threw Russia back and, by and large, reduced the labour productivity of the people to a level considerably below pre-war. The West-European capitalist powers, partly deliberately and partly unconsciously, did everything they could to throw us back, to utilise the elements of the Civil War in Russia in order to spread as much ruin in the country as possible. It was precisely this way out of the imperialist war that seemed to have many advantages. They argued somewhat as follows: "If we fail to overthrow the revolutionary system in Russia, we shall, at all events, hinder its progress towards socialism." And from their point of view they could argue in no other way. In the end, their problem was half-solved. They failed to overthrow the new system created by the revolution, but they did prevent it from at once taking the step forward that would have justified the forecasts of the socialists, that would have enabled the latter to develop the productive forces with enormous speed, to develop all the potentialities which, taken together, would have produced socialism; socialists would thus have proved to all and sundry that socialism contains within itself gigantic forces and that mankind had now entered into a new stage of development of extraordinarily brilliant prospects.

The system of international relationships which has now taken shape is one in which a European state, Germany, is enslaved by the victor countries. Furthermore, owing to their victory, a number of states, the oldest states in the West, are in a position to make some insignificant concessions to their oppressed classes—concessions which, insignificant though they are, nevertheless retard the revolutionary movement in those countries and create some semblance of "class truce".

At the same time, as a result of the last imperialist war, a number of countries of the East, India, China, etc., have been completely jolted out of the rut. Their development has definitely shifted to general European capitalist lines. The general European

ferment has begun to affect them, and it is now clear to the whole world that they have been drawn into a process of development that must lead to a crisis in the whole of world capitalism.

Thus, at the present time we are confronted with the question—shall we be able to hold on with our small and very small peasant production, and in our present state of ruin, until the West-European capitalist countries consummate their development towards socialism? But they are consummating it not as we formerly expected. They are not consummating it through the gradual “maturing” of socialism, but through the exploitation of some countries by others, through the exploitation of the first of the countries vanquished in the imperialist war combined with the exploitation of the whole of the East. On the other hand, precisely as a result of the first imperialist war, the East has been definitely drawn into the revolutionary movement, has been definitely drawn into the general maelstrom of the world revolutionary movement.

What tactics does this situation prescribe for our country? Obviously the following. We must display extreme caution so as to preserve our workers’ government and to retain our small and very small peasantry under its leadership and authority. We have the advantage that the whole world is now passing to a movement that must give rise to a world socialist revolution. But we are labouring under the disadvantage that the imperialists have succeeded in splitting the world into two camps; and this split is made more complicated by the fact that it is extremely difficult for Germany, which is really a land of advanced, cultured, capitalist development, to rise to her feet. All the capitalist powers of what is called the West are pecking at her and preventing her from rising. On the other hand, the entire East, with its hundreds of millions of exploited working people, reduced to the last degree of human suffering, has been forced into a position where its physical and material strength cannot possibly be compared with the physical, material and military strength of any of the much smaller West-European states.

Can we save ourselves from the impending conflict with these imperialist countries? May we hope that the internal antagonisms and conflicts between the thriving imperialist countries of the West and the thriving imperialist countries of the East will give us a second respite as they did the first time, when the campaign of the West-European counter-revolution in support of the Russian counter-revolution broke down owing to the antagonisms in the camp of the counter-revolutionaries of the West and the East, in the camp of the Eastern and Western exploiters, in the camp of Japan and the U.S.A.?

I think the reply to this question should be that the issue depends upon too many factors, and that the outcome of the struggle as a whole can be forecast only because in the long run capitalism itself is educating and training the vast majority of the population of the globe for the struggle.

In the last analysis, the outcome of the struggle will be determined by the fact that Russia, India, China, etc., account for the overwhelming majority of the population of the globe. And during the past few years it is this majority that has been drawn into the struggle for emancipation with extraordinary rapidity, so that in this respect there cannot be the slightest doubt what the final outcome of the world struggle will be. In this sense, the complete victory of socialism is fully and absolutely assured.

But what interests us is not the inevitability of this complete victory of socialism, but the tactics which we, the Russian Communist Party, we, the Russian Soviet Government, should pursue to prevent the West-European counter-revolutionary states from crushing us. To ensure our existence until the next military conflict between the counter-revolutionary imperialist West and the revolutionary and nationalist East, between the most civilised countries of the world and the Orientally backward countries which, however, comprise the majority, this majority must become civilised. We, too, lack enough civilisation to enable us to pass straight on to socialism, although we do have the political requisites for it. We should adopt the following tactics, or pursue the following policy, to save ourselves.

We must strive to build up a state in which the workers retain the leadership of the peasants, in which they retain the confidence of the peasants, and by exercising the greatest economy remove every trace of extravagance from our social relations.

We must reduce our state apparatus to the utmost degree of economy. We must banish from it all traces of extravagance, of which so much has been left over from tsarist Russia, from its bureaucratic capitalist state machine.

Will not this be a reign of peasant limitations?

No. If we see to it that the working class retains its leadership over the peasantry, we shall be able, by exercising the greatest possible thrift in the economic life of our state, to use every saving we make to develop our large-scale machine industry, to develop electrification, the hydraulic extraction of peat, to complete the Volkhov Power Project,<sup>303</sup> etc.

In this, and in this alone, lies our hope. Only when we have done this shall we, speaking figuratively, be able to change horses, to change from the peasant, muzhik horse of poverty, from the horse of an economy designed for a ruined peasant country, to the horse which the proletariat is seeking and must seek—

the horse of large-scale machine industry, of electrification, of the Volkhov Power Station, etc.

That is how I link up in my mind the general plan of our work, of our policy, of our tactics, of our strategy, with the functions of the reorganised Workers' and Peasants' Inspection. This is what, in my opinion, justifies the exceptional care, the exceptional attention that we must devote to the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection in raising it to an exceptionally high level, in giving it a leadership with Central Committee rights, etc., etc.

And this justification is that only by thoroughly purging our government machine, by reducing to the utmost everything that is not absolutely essential in it, shall we be certain of being able to keep going. Moreover, we shall be able to keep going not on the level of a small-peasant country, not on the level of universal limitation, but on a level steadily advancing to large-scale machine industry.

These are the lofty tasks that I dream of for our Workers' and Peasants' Inspection. That is why I am planning for it the amalgamation of the most authoritative Party body with an "ordinary" People's Commissariat.

March 2, 1923

*Pravda* No. 49, March 4, 1923  
Signed. *N. Lenin*

*Collected Works*, Vol. 33,  
pp. 487-502

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## NOTES

- <sup>1</sup> *Sotsial-Democrat*—an illegal newspaper, Central Organ of the R.S.D.L.P., published from February 1908 to January 1917. No. 1 was published in Russia and the subsequent issues in Paris and Geneva. From December 1911 the paper was edited by Lenin. p. 17
- <sup>2</sup> *Kommunist*—a journal founded by V. I. Lenin and published by the editors of *Sotsial-Democrat* jointly with G. L. Pyatakov and Y. B. Bosh, who supplied the funds (the editorial board also included N. I. Bukharin). Only one (double) issue appeared (in September 1915). In 1916, in view of the anti-Party policy pursued by Bukharin, Pyatakov and Bosh, the *Sotsial-Democrat* editors, on Lenin's suggestion, announced that they considered it impossible to continue publication. p. 17
- <sup>3</sup> The reference is to the pamphlet *Socialism and War (The Attitude of the R.S.D.L.P. towards the War)*. p. 17
- <sup>4</sup> *The Basle Manifesto* on war was adopted by the Extraordinary International Socialist Congress held in Basle on November 24 and 25, 1912. It warned the peoples against the danger of an approaching world imperialist war, exposed its predatory aims and called on the workers of all countries to wage a determined struggle for peace, "to pit against the might of capitalist imperialism the international solidarity of the working class". The Basle Manifesto included a clause from the Stuttgart Congress (1907) resolution, which had been formulated by Lenin and which said that in the event of an imperialist war the socialists should take advantage of the economic and political crises caused by the war to work for a socialist revolution. p. 18
- <sup>5</sup> *Mensheviks*—a petty-bourgeois opportunist trend in the Russian Social-Democratic movement. At the Second Congress of the R.S.D.L.P. in 1903 the Party split into a revolutionary wing consisting of Lenin's followers and an opportunist wing headed by Martov. During the election of the Party's central organs the revolutionary Social-Democrats received a majority (*bolshinstvo* in Russian) while the opportunists received a minority (*men-shinstvo* in Russian) of votes; hence the names: Bolsheviks and Mensheviks.  
The Mensheviks came out against the Party's revolutionary programme, against the hegemony of the proletariat in a revolution, against an alliance between the working class and the peasantry and advocated a compromise with the liberal bourgeoisie.

Following the victory of the bourgeois-democratic revolution in February 1917 Mensheviks were members of the bourgeois Provisional Government; they supported its imperialist policy and campaigned against the socialist revolution which was being prepared. p. 19

- <sup>6</sup> *Socialist-Revolutionaries* (S.R.s)—a party of the petty-bourgeois democrats, which arose in Russia at the end of 1901 and the beginning of 1902 as a result of a merger of various Narodnik groups and circles. During the First World War the majority of S.R.s adopted a social-chauvinist stand. After the victory of the bourgeois-democratic revolution in February 1917, the S.R.s, together with the Mensheviks and Cadets, were the mainstay of the counter-revolutionary bourgeois-landowner Provisional Government and their leaders were members of that government. After the October Socialist Revolution in 1917 the S.R.s carried on counter-revolutionary subversive work, actively supported the interventionists and whiteguard generals, and organised terroristic acts against Soviet statesmen and leaders of the Communist Party. p. 19
- <sup>7</sup> Karl Marx, "Critique of the Gotha Programme" (Marx and Engels, *Selected Works*, in three volumes, Vol. 3, Moscow, 1973, p. 26). p. 20
- <sup>8</sup> See Engels' letter to August Bebel of March 18-28, 1875 (Marx and Engels, *Selected Works*, Vol. 3, Moscow, 1973, p. 34). p. 24
- <sup>9</sup> Lenin refers to the idea expressed by Engels in his Introduction to *The Civil War in France* by Marx (Marx and Engels, *Selected Works*, Vol. 2, Moscow, 1973, pp. 185-86). p. 26
- <sup>10</sup> Lenin is quoting Engels' article "On Authority" (Marx and Engels, *Selected Works*, Vol. 2, Moscow, 1973, p. 379). p. 26
- <sup>11</sup> See Marx's letter to Ludwig Kugelmann of April 12, 1871, Marx's *The Civil War in France* and the Introduction to this work written by Engels in 1891 (Marx and Engels, *Selected Works*, Vol. 2, Moscow, 1973, p. 420, pp. 187-38, p. 217). p. 27
- <sup>12</sup> The reference is to Preface written in 1872 by Marx and Engels to the German edition of the *Manifesto of the Communist Party* (Marx and Engels, *Selected Works*, Vol. 1, Moscow, 1973, pp. 98-99). p. 27
- <sup>13</sup> On August 4, 1914, the Social-Democratic group in the German Reichstag voted for the granting of war credits to the Kaiser's government. p. 27
- <sup>14</sup> See Frederick Engels, *The Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State* (Marx and Engels, *Selected Works*, Vol. 3, Moscow, 1973, p. 328). p. 29
- <sup>15</sup> *Whigs and Tories*—political parties in England which were founded in the 1670s and 1680s and alternately succeeded each other in power. The Whigs expressed the interests of financial circles and the commercial bourgeoisie, as well as of that part of the aristocracy which had become bourgeois. They subsequently founded the Liberal Party. The Tories represented the big landowners and the upper strata of the Anglican clergy. They defended feudal traditions and opposed liberal and progressive demands. Subsequently the Tories became the Conservative Party. p. 30

- <sup>16</sup> In 1894, the reactionary monarchist circles of the French militarists instituted proceedings against Dreyfus, a Jewish officer of the French General Staff, on a trumped-up charge of espionage and high treason. A court-martial sentenced Dreyfus to life imprisonment, and the whole affair served as a pretext for French reactionary circles to fan anti-Semitism and attack the republican system and democratic liberties. In 1898, when socialists and progressive bourgeois democrats (Émile Zola, Jean Jaurès, Anatole France and others) started a campaign for a review of the Dreyfus case, the affair assumed a political colouring and the country split into two camps—republicans and democrats on the one side and the bloc of monarchists, clericals, anti-Semites and nationalists on the other. In 1899, under pressure of public opinion, Dreyfus was pardoned and released but it was only in 1906 that the Court of Appeal acquitted him and reinstated him in the army. p. 31
- <sup>17</sup> This refers to the brutal suppression of the Irish rebellion of 1916 aimed at liberating the country from British rule.  
*Ulster*—the north-eastern part of Ireland, whose population is mostly English. Ulster troops joined with the English in putting down the Irish rebellion p. 31
- <sup>18</sup> *State Duma* (or *Duma*)—a representative body which the tsarist government was forced to convene as a result of the revolutionary events of 1905. Formally a legislative body, the Duma in fact had no real power. Elections to it were neither direct, equal, nor general. The electoral rights of the working classes as well as of the non-Russian nationalities were greatly curtailed, and a considerable number of workers and peasants were disfranchised altogether. The First (April-July 1906) and the Second (February-June 1907) Duma were dissolved by the tsarist government. On June 3, 1907, the latter carried out a coup d'état and passed a new electoral law which curtailed even more the rights of the workers, peasants and urban petty bourgeoisie and ensured the domination of a reactionary bloc of landowners and big capitalists in the Third (1907-12) and the Fourth (1912-17) Duma. p. 31
- <sup>19</sup> *Shylock*—a character from Shakespeare's comedy *The Merchant of Venice*, a cruel, hard-hearted usurer who mercilessly demanded the pound of flesh forfeited by his debtor. p. 34
- <sup>20</sup> See Marx's article "L'indifferenza in materia politica" ("On Political Indifferentism"), (*Almanacco Repubblicano* for 1874). p. 35
- <sup>21</sup> See Engels' article "On Authority" (Marx and Engels, *Selected Works*, Vol. 2, Moscow, 1973, p. 379). p. 35
- <sup>22</sup> See Engels' letter to August Bebel of March 18-28, 1875 (Marx and Engels, *Selected Works*, Vol. 3, Moscow, 1973, pp. 34-35). p. 36
- <sup>23</sup> *Augean stables* (Greek myth)—the enormous stables of Augeas, King of Elis, which were not cleaned for many years. The expression "Augean stables" is synonymous with filthiness, dirt or extreme disorder in work. p. 38
- <sup>24</sup> The elections to the Constituent Assembly took place after the October Socialist Revolution, on the fixed date—November 12 (25), 1917. Deputies were elected according to lists drawn up prior to the October Revolution and in keeping with the regulations endorsed by the Provisional Government. Elections were held at a time when the mass of the people did not



yet appreciate the importance of the socialist revolution. The Right Socialist-Revolutionaries took advantage of this and managed to secure a majority of votes in areas remote from the capital and industrial centres. The Constituent Assembly was convened by the Soviet Government and opened on January 5 (18), 1918 in Petrograd. Since the Assembly's counter-revolutionary majority rejected the Declaration of Rights of the Working and Exploited People submitted by the All-Russia Central Executive Committee, and refused to approve the decrees of the Second Congress of Soviets on peace, land and the transfer of power to the Soviets, the C.E.C., by its decree of January 6 (19), dissolved it. p. 40

<sup>25</sup> This refers to the April Theses (see present edition, Vol. 2, pp. 29-33.). p. 41

<sup>26</sup> Lenin refers to Engels' Introduction to Marx's work *The Civil War in France* (Marx and Engels, *Selected Works*, Vol. 2, Moscow, 1973, p. 188). p. 43

<sup>27</sup> Lenin's pamphlet *Political Parties in Russia and the Tasks of the Proletariat* was published by *The Evening Post* on January 15, 1918, and by *The Class Struggle*, the organ of the Left wing of the American Socialist Party, No. 4, November-December 1917. It also appeared as a separate edition. *The Evening Post*—a bourgeois newspaper published in New York from 1801; up to 1832 it was called *The New York Evening Post*. For a number of years it pursued a liberal policy. Subsequently it became the mouthpiece of the most reactionary U.S. imperialist forces. It is now named *The New York Post*. p. 47

<sup>28</sup> Lenin has in mind the resolution on the revision of the Party programme adopted at the Seventh (April) All-Russia Conference of the R.S.D.L.P.(B.). The text of this resolution was written by Lenin. p. 47

<sup>29</sup> *Cadets*—abbreviation for the *Constitutional-Democrats*—members of the leading party of the liberal-monarchist bourgeoisie of Russia, founded in October 1905. During the First World War they actively supported the policy of conquest pursued by the tsarist government abroad. During the bourgeois-democratic revolution in February 1917 they sought to save the monarchy. As leading members of the bourgeois Provisional Government the Cadets pursued an anti-popular, counter-revolutionary policy. After the victory of the October Socialist Revolution they became rabid enemies of the Soviet power and took part in all armed counter-revolutionary actions and campaigns initiated by the interventionists. p. 50

<sup>30</sup> *The All-Russia Democratic Conference* was convened by the Menshevik Socialist-Revolutionary Central Executive Committee of Soviets and met in Petrograd in September 1917 to decide the question of power. The Menshevik and S.R. leaders did all they could to reduce the number of representatives of the workers and peasants and increase the number of delegates of the various petty-bourgeois and bourgeois organisations, thereby securing a majority for themselves. The Bolsheviks took part in the Conference in order to utilise it as a platform for exposing the Mensheviks and S.R.s.

The Conference adopted the decision to set up a Pre-Parliament (Provisional Council of the Republic), which, in conformity with the regulations approved by the Provisional Government, was to be merely an advisory government body.

Lenin insisted that the Bolsheviks should withdraw from the Pre-Parliament and emphasised the need for concentrating their efforts on prep-

arations for an uprising. The Party Central Committee discussed Lenin's proposal and decided that the Bolsheviks should withdraw from the Pre-Parliament. At its opening session on October 7 (20) the Bolsheviks read out their declaration and withdrew. p. 51

- <sup>11</sup> This refers to a counter-revolutionary revolt by the bourgeoisie and landowners in August 1917 headed by the tsarist army commander-in-chief General Kornilov. The mutineers planned to seize Petrograd, crush the Bolshevik Party, dissolve the Soviets, and establish military dictatorship in the country with a view to restoring the monarchy.

Started on August 25 (September 7), the Kornilov revolt was put down by workers and peasants led by the Bolsheviks. p. 53

- <sup>12</sup> *The Versailles men*—supporters of the French counter-revolutionary bourgeois government of Adolphe Thiers, which had its headquarters in Versailles after the victory of the Paris Commune in 1871. They entered into a military alliance with the Prussian forces to suppress the uprising of the Paris workers. p. 53

- <sup>13</sup> *Petrushka*—a serf peasant in *The Dead Souls*, a novel by the Russian writer N. V. Gogol. He could read only by syllables and enjoyed the mere process of reading, never pausing to think over the contents of a book. p. 53

- <sup>14</sup> The reference is to a counter-revolutionary armed revolt of the Czechoslovak corps which had been formed in Russia from Czech and Slovak prisoners of war before the October Socialist Revolution. The revolt was engineered by the Entente's imperialists with the active assistance of the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries, and broke out in May 1918. Acting in close contact with the whiteguards and kulaks, the mutineers occupied a large part of the Urals, the Volga area and Siberia and everywhere restored bourgeois rule.

The Volga area was liberated by the Red Army in the autumn of 1918, the whiteguard Czechs were completely routed late in 1919. p. 53

- <sup>15</sup> Lenin refers to his article "The Immediate Tasks of the Soviet Government" (see present edition, Vol. 2, p. 586-617.). p. 55

- <sup>16</sup> *Judas Golovlyov*—the main character in *The Golovlyov Family*, a novel by the Russian writer M. Y. Saltykov-Shchedrin. This feudal landowner was nicknamed Judas for his hypocrisy, sanctimoniousness and heartlessness. p. 56

- <sup>17</sup> *Lieberdans*—nickname for the Menshevik leaders Lieber and Dan and their supporters, which stuck to them after publication of Demyan Bedny's feuilleton "Lieberdan". p. 56

- <sup>18</sup> *Activists*—the extreme Right-wing group in the Menshevik party which recognised and in fact resorted to methods of armed struggle against the Soviet government. The "activists" took part in various counter-revolutionary and terroristic acts, relying on military and financial aid from the foreign interventionists. p. 56

- <sup>19</sup> August Bebel spoke about this at the Magdeburg Congress of the Social-Democratic Party of Germany on September 20, 1910. p. 57

- <sup>20</sup> *Frankfurter Zeitung*—a daily newspaper, mouthpiece of big German stockbrokers, published in Frankfort-on-the-Main from 1856 to 1943. p. 57

- <sup>41</sup> *Vorwärts*—a daily newspaper, Central Organ of the German Social-Democratic Party, published in Berlin from 1891 to 1933. p. 57
- <sup>42</sup> The reference is to the editorial "Dictatorship or Democracy" published in *Vorwärts* No. 290, October 21, 1918. p. 57
- <sup>43</sup> Lenin has in mind Plekhanov's speech at the Second R.S.D.L.P. Congress during the discussion of the Party programme on July 30 (August 12), 1903. Lenin made repeated references to Plekhanov's words in his works (see, for example, present edition, Vol. 1, pp. 260-62.). p. 59
- <sup>44</sup> *The Zimmerwald Left group* was founded on Lenin's initiative at the International Socialist Conference in Zimmerwald in September 1915. It united eight delegates representing the Central Committee of the R.S.D.L.P. and the Left Social-Democrats of Sweden, Norway, Switzerland, Germany, Polish Social-Democratic opposition and Social-Democrats of Latvia. Led by Lenin, the Zimmerwald Left group fought the Centrist majority of the Conference. The group declared that, while remaining in the Zimmerwald Association, it would act independently of it internationally and spread its views. Its guiding force were the Bolsheviks who alone adopted a consistent internationalist position. p. 61
- <sup>45</sup> Lenin quotes from Engels' Introduction to Marx's *The Civil War in France* (Marx and Engels, *Selected Works*, Vol. 2, Moscow, 1973, pp. 179-80). p. 62
- <sup>46</sup> Karl Marx, *The Civil War in France* (Marx and Engels, *Selected Works*, Vol. 2, Moscow, 1973, pp. 219-20). p. 62
- <sup>47</sup> *Longuetists*—a minority group in the French Socialist Party headed by Jean Longuet. During the world imperialist war of 1914-18 the Longuetists pursued a policy of compromise with social-chauvinists; they rejected the revolutionary struggle and advocated "defence of the fatherland" in the imperialist war. After the October Socialist Revolution in Russia they declared themselves to be supporters of the dictatorship of the proletariat but in actual fact were against it. In December 1920 the Longuetists, together with the avowed reformists, broke away from the Party and joined the so-called Two-and-a-Half International. p. 65
- <sup>48</sup> *Left Socialist-Revolutionaries*—members of the Left S.R. party which was formally organised at its First All-Russia Congress held from November 19 to 28 (December 2-11), 1917. Until then they had formed the Left wing of the S.R. Party. At the Second All-Russia Congress of Soviets the Left S.R.s voted with the Bolsheviks on the major items of the agenda, but they rejected the Bolsheviks' invitation to join the Soviet Government. After long hesitation, the Left S.R.s, wishing to retain their influence among the peasants, came to an agreement with the Bolsheviks and their representatives accepted posts in a number of bodies of the People's Commissariats. However, they clashed with the Bolsheviks on the fundamental questions of socialist construction and opposed the dictatorship of the proletariat. In January-February 1918 the Left S.R. Central Committee started a campaign against the conclusion of the Peace Treaty of Brest-Litovsk, and when it had been signed and ratified by the Fourth Congress of Soviets in March 1918, the Left S.R.s withdrew from the Council of People's Commissars but continued to hold their posts in the bodies of People's Commissariats and in local government. As the socialist revolution developed in the countryside they went into opposition to Soviet power. In July 1918 the Central

Committee of the Left S.R.s organised the assassination in Moscow of the German ambassador, Count Mirbach, hoping in this way to provoke a war between Soviet Russia and Germany, and initiated an armed revolt against the Soviet government. In view of this, after the revolt had been suppressed, the Fifth All-Russia Congress of Soviets adopted the decision to expel from the Soviets all Left S.R.s who shared the views of their leaders. p. 66

- 4) "*Left-Communists*"—an anti-Party group which arose in early 1918, when the conclusion of a peace treaty with Germany (Brest Peace) was on the order of the day. Under cover of Leftist phrases on a revolutionary war, the group advocated an adventurous policy of drawing the Soviet Republic, which had no army yet, into a war with imperialist Germany, thereby endangering the very existence of Soviet power.

The "*Left Communists*" also opposed the introduction of one-man management and labour discipline and were against the employment of bourgeois experts in industry. The Bolshevik Party, under Lenin's guidance, gave a decisive rebuff to the policy of the "*Left Communists*". p. 66

- 5) "*Spartacists*"—a revolutionary organisation of German Left Social-Democrats founded at the beginning of the First World War by Karl Liebknecht, Rosa Luxemburg, Franz Mehring, Clara Zetkin and others.

The Spartacists conducted revolutionary propaganda among the people, organised mass anti-war actions, led strikes, and exposed the imperialist character of the war and the treachery of the opportunist Social-Democratic leaders.

In November 1918, during the revolution in Germany, the Spartacists formed the Spartacus League, and at the Inaugural Congress, held on December 30, 1918-January 1, 1919, they founded the Communist Party of Germany. p. 68

- 6) Lenin refers to Kautsky's article "The Driving Forces and Prospects of the Russian Revolution" which was published in Russian as a pamphlet in December 1906, Lenin edited the article and supplied it with a preface. p. 71

- 7) See Marx's article "The Bourgeoisie and the Counter-Revolution" (Marx and Engels, *Selected Works*, Vol. 1, Moscow, 1973, pp. 138-41) p. 72

- 8) Two new parties—the Narodnik Communists and the Revolutionary Communists—separated from the Left Socialist-Revolutionary Party after the provocative assassination by Left S.R.s of the German ambassador, Count Mirbach, and their revolt on July 6-7, 1918 aimed at torpedoing the Peace Treaty of Brest-Litovsk and drawing Soviet Russia into a war with Germany.

The *Narodnik Communists* condemned the anti-Soviet activity of the Left S.R.s and set up their own party at a conference in September 1918. On November 6, 1918, its extraordinary congress unanimously decided to dissolve the party and merge with the Russian Communist Party (Bolsheviks).

The *Party of Revolutionary Communism* was formed at a congress held in Moscow on September 25-30, 1918, and existed as a small group until 1920. The Sixth Congress of this party, in September 1920, adopted the decision to affiliate with the Russian Communist Party (Bolsheviks). In October of the same year, the Central Committee of the R.C.P.(B) allowed Party organisations to admit former members of the Party of Revolutionary Communism into their ranks. p. 72

<sup>54</sup> See Marx's letter to Ludwig Kugelmann of April 12, 1871 (Marx and Engels, *Selected Correspondence*, Moscow, 1965, pp. 262-63). p. 75

<sup>55</sup> *Poor Peasants' Committees* were established in June 1918. By decree of the All-Russia Central Executive Committee, they were charged with the task of taking stock of the food supplies of the peasant households, ascertaining the kulaks' food resources and surpluses, and assisting the Soviet supply bodies in requisitioning these surpluses, as well as supplying the poor with food at the expense of the kulak farms, distributing farm implements and manufactured goods, etc. However, the activities of the Poor Peasants' Committees embraced all aspects of work in the countryside: in actual fact they became the strongholds and organs of the proletarian dictatorship there.

By the end of 1918 the Poor Peasants' Committees had fulfilled their mission, and they were merged with the volost and village Soviets p. 78

<sup>56</sup> By the *July crisis* Lenin means kulak counter-revolutionary revolts in the central gubernias of Russia, in the Volga area, the Urals and Siberia in the summer of 1918, organised by Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries with the support of foreign interventionists. p. 78

<sup>57</sup> *Blanquism*—a trend in the French socialist movement headed by Louis Auguste Blanqui (1805-1881), a prominent revolutionary and outstanding representative of French utopian communism. The Blanquists' weak side was their conviction that revolution can be accomplished by a small group of conspirators and their failure to understand the necessity of drawing the working-class masses into the revolutionary movement. p. 79

<sup>58</sup> This refers to the Socialist-Revolutionary bill submitted by S. I. Maslov, Minister for Agriculture, to the Provisional Government a few days before the October Socialist Revolution. It envisaged the creation of a special lease fund under the Land Committees, to which state-owned and monastery lands were to be transferred. Landed proprietorship was to remain intact. Landowners were to turn over to this temporary lease fund only the land they had formerly leased out and to receive payment from the peasants for the "leased land".

Arrests of members of the Land Committees were carried out by the Provisional Government in response to peasants' revolts and seizures of landowners' estates. p. 80

<sup>59</sup> The reference is to the *Peasant Mandate on Land* which was drawn up on the basis of 242 local peasant mandates and incorporated in the Decree on Land adopted by the Second All-Russia Congress of Soviets on October 26 (November 8), 1917. The decree liquidated the landowners' estates and transferred the land to the peasants p. 81

<sup>60</sup> The reference is to Lenin's work *The Agrarian Programme of Social-Democracy in the First Russian Revolution 1905-07* (*Collected Works*, Vol. 13, pp. 217-431). p. 83

<sup>61</sup> See Karl Marx, *Theories of Surplus-Value*, Part III, Moscow, 1971, p. 472. p. 86

<sup>62</sup> See Engels' letter to August Bebel of March 18-28, 1875 (Marx and Engels, *Selected Works*, Vol. 3, Moscow, 1973, pp. 34-35). p. 96

<sup>63</sup> Lenin refers to the book by M. Ostrogorsky, *La Democratie et les Partis Politiques*, which was first published in Paris in 1903. It contains rich factual material on the history of Britain and the U.S.A. exposing the falsehood and hypocrisy of bourgeois democracy. p. 97

<sup>64</sup> *The First Congress of the Communist International* met in Moscow from March 2 to 6, 1919. It was attended by 52 delegates from communist and Left-wing socialist parties, groups and organisations of 30 countries, 34 delegates being with vote and 18 with voice but no vote.

The Congress was opened by Lenin. After reports from the countries, the platform of the Communist International was discussed and adopted. The main item on the agenda was the question of bourgeois democracy and the dictatorship of the proletariat. Lenin delivered a report on this question on March 4, 1919. The Congress unanimously approved his theses and submitted them to the Bureau of the Comintern's Executive Committee for circulation in all countries. It also adopted a resolution moved by Lenin as a supplement to the theses. On the same day the Congress adopted a decision to found the Third, Communist International. On Lenin's proposal a resolution was passed to dissolve the Zimmerwald Association. The First Congress of the Communist International adopted a Manifesto to the workers of the whole world and a number of other resolutions and decisions. It decided to set up two guiding bodies: an Executive Committee, and a Bureau appointed by the former and consisting of five members.

The Communist International existed from 1919 to 1943, when the Presidium of its Executive Committee, with the approval of all Communist Parties, took the decision to dissolve the Comintern in view of the fact that the conditions had changed and it was impossible to exercise leadership of the international communist movement from a single centre p. 98

<sup>65</sup> *The Berne Conference* was the first post-war conference of social-chauvinist and Centrist parties convened with the aim of restoring the Second International. It was held from February 3 to 10, 1919. One of the main items on the agenda was the question of democracy and dictatorship. Hjalmar Branting, a Centrist, spoke on this question and tried to show that the socialist revolution and the dictatorship of the proletariat would not lead to socialism. Karl Kautsky and Eduard Bernstein insisted that the conference should condemn Bolshevism and the socialist revolution in Russia. Branting moved a resolution which, after a hypocritical greeting to the revolutions in Russia, Austria-Hungary and Germany, essentially condemned the dictatorship of the proletariat and lauded bourgeois democracy. It was adopted by a majority vote.

The First Congress of the Communist International adopted a special resolution, "On the Attitude Toward 'Socialist' Trends and the Berne Conference", criticising the Berne resolutions and, in particular, condemning the attempts by the leaders of the Right-wing socialists to make the Berne Conference adopt a resolution that would serve the Second International as a cover for an armed imperialist intervention against Soviet Russia. p. 98

<sup>66</sup> See Engels' Introduction to Marx's work *The Civil War in France* (Marx and Engels, *Selected Works*, Vol. 2, Moscow, 1973, p. 189). p. 99

<sup>67</sup> See Karl Marx, *The Civil War in France* (Marx and Engels, *Selected Works*, Vol. 2, Moscow, 1973, p. 221). p. 100

<sup>68</sup> *Shop Stewards Committees*—elective labour organisations, which were set up in various industries of Great Britain and were particularly widespread during the First World War. Unlike the compromising trade unions, which

pursued a policy of "civil peace" and renounced the strike struggle, these committees championed the interests and demands of the workers, led their strikes and carried on anti-war propaganda.

After the October Socialist Revolution the Shop Stewards Committees actively supported Soviet Russia. p. 104

- <sup>69</sup> *Die Freiheit*—a daily newspaper, organ of the Independent Social-Democratic Party of Germany; published in Berlin from November 1918 to October 1922. p. 106

- <sup>70</sup> "*Independents*"—members of the Independent Social-Democratic Party of Germany, a Centrist party founded at the Inaugural Congress in Gotha in April 1917. Under cover of Centrist phrasology they preached unity with social-chauvinists and renounced the class struggle. The Kautskyst Labour Group in the Reichstag formed the core of the party.

At its congress in Halle in October 1920 the Independent Social-Democratic Party split. Many of its members joined the Communist Party of Germany in December 1920. The Right-wing elements founded a separate party and adopted the old name—the Independent Social-Democratic Party of Germany, which existed until 1922. p. 106

- <sup>71</sup> Lenin has in mind the resolution of the Seventh Congress of the R.C.P.(B.), held on March 6-8, 1918, on changing the name of the Party and its programme. p. 107

- <sup>72</sup> *Gazeta Pechatnikov* (Printers' Newspaper)—organ of the Moscow Printers' Union, which began to appear on December 8, 1918. At that time the trade union was under Menshevik influence. In March 1919 the paper was closed down because of its anti Soviet propaganda. p. 109

- <sup>73</sup> In the small hours of October 31, 1918, a bourgeois-democratic revolution took place in Hungary, as a result of which state power passed to the liberal bourgeoisie, which entered into an agreement with the Social-Democratic Party. The new government did not adopt a single measure which could improve the condition of the working class and the peasantry. This caused discontent among the working people and they began to set up their own revolutionary organs of power—Councils (Soviets) of Workers', Peasants' and Soldiers' Deputies. On November 16 Hungary was proclaimed a republic. The old parliament was dissolved. Bourgeois parties started a wide campaign for the convocation of a Constituent Assembly. The Communist Party of Hungary, founded on November 20, 1918, put forward the slogan "All Power to the Soviets!" It headed a series of mass actions of the Hungarian proletariat at the end of 1918 and the beginning of 1919. A revolutionary situation set in in Hungary.

On March 20 the Károlyi government resigned. The Communists advanced the following demands: proclamation of a Soviet Republic in Hungary, nationalisation of industry, confiscation of landed estates and an alliance with Soviet Russia. The Hungarian working people wholeheartedly supported the Communist Party. On March 21 Budapest workers seized all key strategic points and disarmed the police. Hungary was proclaimed a Soviet Republic.

In 1917-19, in Switzerland too there was an upsurge of the working-class movement under the influence of the October Socialist Revolution in Russia. In November 1918 a general political strike broke out in support of Soviet Russia. The Left, revolutionary, elements in the Swiss Socialist Party formed a Communist group, and in their leaflets and booklets they urged the setting up of Councils of Workers' and Peasants' Deputies. The

delegate from the Swiss Communist Group to the First Congress of the Communist International reported that the Council of Workers' Deputies in Zurich acknowledged the "communist programme as its platform".  
p. 110

<sup>74</sup> Lenin refers to Rosa Luxemburg's article "Der Anfang" (The Beginning) published in *Die Rote Fahne* No. 3, November 18, 1918.  
p. 110

<sup>75</sup> See Note 59.  
p. 111

<sup>76</sup> *Thirty Years' War of 1618-48*—a general European war which was caused by the aggravation of the contradictions between different groups of European states and assumed the form of a struggle between Protestants and Catholics. At first the war was characterised by resistance to the reactionary forces of feudal-absolutist Europe but later, especially from 1635, it took the form of a number of invasions of Germany by rival foreign conquerors. The war ended in 1648 with the conclusion of the Peace of Westphalia, which confirmed Germany's political disunity.  
p. 113

<sup>77</sup> See Frederick Engels, "Einleitung zu Sigismund Borkheim Schrift *Zur Erinnerung für die deutschen Mordspatrioten 1806-1807*" (Introduction to Sigismund Borkheim's Pamphlet *In Memory of the German Arch-Patriots of 1806-1807*) (Marx, Engels, *Werke*, Bd. 21, Berlin, 1962, S. 346).  
p. 113

<sup>78</sup> See Karl Marx, *Capital*, Vol. 1, Moscow, 1972, p. 347  
p. 114

<sup>79</sup> *Smolny*—the building of the former Smolny Institute in Petrograd, the seat of the Soviet Government until it moved to Moscow in March 1918.  
p. 117

<sup>80</sup> In December 1917, Lenin handed to Svinhufvud, head of the Finnish bourgeois government, the decree of the Council of People's Commissars recognising Finland's independence. The decree was confirmed by the All-Russia Central Executive Committee on January 4, 1918.  
p. 117

<sup>81</sup> Lenin refers here to the negotiations held in March 1919 on the formation of an autonomous Bashkirian Soviet Republic. They resulted in the signing of an agreement which set up the Autonomous Bashkirian Soviet Republic on the basis of the Soviet Constitution and defined its frontiers and administrative divisions.  
p. 117

<sup>82</sup> *The Decree on Consumers' Communes* was adopted by the Council of People's Commissars on March 16, 1919, and published on March 20 in *Izvestia*. Under this decree all co-operatives in a town or village were to be united into a single consumers' commune. All local consumers' communes were to be united into gubernia unions having a single centre—the Central Union of Consumers' Co-operatives. Since the new name of the co-operatives led in some places to a misunderstanding and wrong interpretation of the decree, the All-Russia Central Executive Committee by its decision of June 30, 1919—"On the Workers' and Peasants' Consumers' Societies"—changed the name "consumers' commune" to "consumers' society", a name to which the public were accustomed.  
p. 122

<sup>83</sup> The reference is to the internationalist Mensheviks grouped round the newspaper *Novaya Zhizn* (New Life), which was published in Petrograd from April 1917 to July 1918.  
p. 126

<sup>84</sup> *The Erfurt Programme* of the German Social-Democratic Party was adopted in October 1891 at the congress in Erfurt. Underlying the programme was the Marxist teaching on the inevitable downfall of the capitalist mode of



production and its replacement by the socialist mode of production. It emphasised the need for the working class to wage a political struggle, stressed the role of the party as the organiser of this struggle, and so on. However, the programme contained serious concessions to opportunism and was silent about the dictatorship of the proletariat. A thorough criticism of the first draft programme was given by Engels in his work "A Critique of the Draft Social-Democratic Programme of 1891" (Marx and Engels, *Selected Works*, Vol. 3, Moscow, 1973, pp. 429-39). The German Social-Democratic leaders concealed Engels' criticism from the Party rank and file and his important remarks were not taken into account when the final text of the programme was drawn up. p. 133

- <sup>85</sup> The reference is to the Finnish Socialist Republic which was proclaimed following the transfer of state power to the workers late in January 1918. On March 1, a treaty was signed in Petrograd between the Finnish Socialist Workers' Republic and the Russian Soviet Federative Socialist Republic. Founded on principles of full equality and respect of sovereignty of the two countries, this treaty was the world's first treaty between socialist countries.

In May 1918, as a result of interference by the German armed forces, the Finnish revolution was put down, after a fierce civil war.

The Finnish Socialist Republic existed from January to May 1918.

p. 137

- <sup>86</sup> See Frederick Engels, *The Peasant Question in France and Germany* (Marx and Engels, *Selected Works*, Vol. 3, Moscow, 1973, pp. 457-76). p. 145

- <sup>87</sup> The delegates from the Nizhni-Novgorod Party organisation handed in a statement to the Congress Presidium in which they pointed out that the words "the middle peasants generally" are a printer's error and that it should read: "some of the middle peasants". p. 147

- <sup>88</sup> See Karl Marx, "Critique of the Gotha Programme" (Marx and Engels, *Selected Works*, Vol. 3, Moscow, 1973, p. 26). p. 161

- <sup>89</sup> This refers to the conspiracy to surrender Petrograd headed by a counter-revolutionary organisation, the "National Centre", which united anti-Soviet and underground espionage groups. Early in the morning of June 13, 1919 the conspirators raised a mutiny at the Krasnaya Gorka (Red Hill) fort, one of the major approaches to Petrograd. Coastal defence troops, Baltic Fleet ships, military aircraft and detachments of volunteers were dispatched against the mutineers. In the small hours of June 16, the coastal defence troops captured the fort. The counter-revolutionary organisation at the head of the conspiracy was discovered and liquidated.

*Black Hundreds*—monarchist gangs set up by the tsarist police to combat the revolutionary movement. p. 170

- <sup>90</sup> *The Battle of Sadowa* took place on July 3, 1866. It ended in the victory of Prussia over Austria and decided the outcome of the Austro-Prussian War. p. 174

- <sup>91</sup> The reference is to the Party programme adopted at the Eighth Congress of the Russian Communist Party (Bolsheviks). p. 177

- <sup>92</sup> Concerning the consumers' communes, see Note 82. p. 181

- <sup>93</sup> The letter "*All out for the Fight against Denikin!*" was written by Lenin in connection with the decisions of the Plenary Meeting of the R.C.P.(B.) Central Committee held on July 3-4, 1919, which discussed major problems facing the Soviet Republic in view of the new imperialist campaign. p. 184
- <sup>94</sup> See Note 89. p. 193
- <sup>95</sup> *The Union of Russia's Resurrection*—a counter-revolutionary organisation founded in 1918 and consisting of Constitutional-Democrats, Popular Socialists, Right-wing Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks; it had direct connections with foreign missions and intelligence services. p. 193
- <sup>96</sup> *The Second All-Russia Congress of Communist Organisations of the Peoples of the East*, convened by the Central Bureau of Communist Organisations of the Peoples of the East at the R.C.P.(B.) Central Committee, was held in Moscow from November 22 to December 3, 1919. p. 239
- <sup>97</sup> *The Treaty of Versailles*, which concluded the First World War, was signed on June 28, 1919 by the U.S.A., the British Empire, France, Italy, Japan and the countries allied with them, on the one hand, and by Germany on the other. This treaty aimed at confirming the redivision of the capitalist world in favour of the victor countries and creating a system of relations between countries which would help to strangle Soviet Russia and suppress the revolutionary movement throughout the world. - p. 242
- <sup>98</sup> *The Treaty of Brest-Litovsk* was concluded between Soviet Russia and the Central Powers (Germany, Austria-Hungary, Bulgaria and Turkey) on March 3, 1918 on terms extremely harsh for Soviet Russia. It was concluded despite dogged resistance from Trotsky and the anti-Party group of "Left Communists". It was thanks to Lenin's enormous efforts that the peace treaty with Germany was signed. On November 13, 1918, following the revolution in Germany, which led to the downfall of the monarchy, the All-Russia Central Executive Committee annulled the unjust and predatory Treaty of Brest-Litovsk. p. 242
- <sup>99</sup> *The First Congress of Agricultural Communes and Agricultural Artels* was convened by the People's Commissariat of Agriculture and met on December 3-10, 1919, in Moscow. The Congress was attended by 140 delegates, of whom 93 were Communists. Lenin spoke on the second day of the Congress. The Congress adopted the Rules of the All Russia Association of Agricultural Producer Collectives (Communes and Artels), which laid down as the main objects of the Association the union of all agricultural collectives in a single producers' association, propaganda of the idea of collective farming and practical help for the peasantry of the neighbourhood, especially the families of Red Army men and the rural poor. p. 250
- <sup>100</sup> *The thousand-million-ruble fund* was set up by a decree of the Council of People's Commissars dated November 2, 1918, 'for the purpose of improving and developing agriculture and for its speediest reconstruction on socialist lines'. Grants and loans from this fund were given to agricultural communes, working associations and rural societies or groups of peasants, provided they went over from individual to collective farming. The People's Commissars of Agriculture and Finance elaborated detailed rules for granting loans to develop agriculture. p. 250
- <sup>101</sup> *The Statute on Socialist Land Settlement and the Measures for the Transition to Socialist Farming* was adopted by the All-Russia Central Executive Committee in February 1919. It was based on the decisions of

the First All-Russia Congress of Land Departments, Poor Peasants' Committees and Communes held in December 1918. The Statute outlined a number of practical measures for raising agricultural productivity, extending the areas under crops and reconstructing agriculture on socialist lines.  
p. 250

- <sup>102</sup> *The All-Ukraine Revolutionary Military Committee* was a provisional organ of revolutionary power in the Ukraine set up in December 1919. It was entrusted with the functions of the Central Executive Committee and the Council of People's Commissars of the Ukraine.  
p. 261

- <sup>103</sup> *Borotbists*—members of a petty-bourgeois, nationalist party which arose in May 1918 after the split in the Ukrainian Socialist-Revolutionary Party. They were called Borotbists after the central organ of their party, the newspaper *Borotba* (The Struggle). In March 1919 they assumed the name of the Ukrainian Socialist-Revolutionary Party of Borotbist Communists, and in August of that year they began to be called the Ukrainian Communist Party of Borotbists.

In view of the growing influence of the Bolsheviks among the peasants and the successes of Soviet power in the Ukraine, the Borotbists were compelled to adopt a decision on voluntary dissolution. The Fourth Conference of the Communist Party (Bolsheviks) of the Ukraine, held in March 1920, agreed to admit the Borotbists into its ranks. In later years, however, many Borotbists resumed their anti-Soviet activities and headed the struggle of the counter-revolutionary, bourgeois-nationalist elements in the Ukraine.  
p. 261

- <sup>104</sup> After the victory of the Red Army over Kolchak and Denikin, the American press, expressing the sentiments of its businessmen, twice asked Lenin for an interview. On February 18, 1920, he answered the questions of Karl Wiegand, Berlin correspondent of American Universal Service.

Lenin's answers were wired to Berlin and from there to New York on February 21, 1920. That same evening they were published in the *New York Evening Journal*. Lenin's answers were also reprinted in the German communist and socialist press.  
p. 264

- <sup>105</sup> In mid-February 1920, Lenin gave an interview to Lincoln Eyre, correspondent of the American bourgeois newspaper *The World*.

The interview lasted for an hour and touched on burning questions of the day. It was published in *The World* on February 21, 1920, and reprinted in many newspapers of Western Europe and America.  
p. 267

- <sup>106</sup> *The League of Nations*—an international organisation which existed between the First and the Second World War. It was founded in 1919 at the Paris Peace Conference of the victors in the First World War.

Between 1920 and 1934 its activities were hostile to the Soviet Union. In 1920-21 the League was one of the centres organising armed intervention against Soviet Russia.

On September 15, 1934, on the initiative of French diplomats, thirty-four member states of the League invited the Soviet Union to join the League. The Soviet Union joined the League of Nations in order to carry on the struggle for peace, but its attempts to establish a peace front met with the resistance of the reactionary circles of the Western powers.  
p. 269

- <sup>107</sup> *The Peace Treaty between the R.S.F.S.R. and Lithuania* was concluded in Moscow on July 12, 1920. *The Peace Treaty between the R.S.F.S.R. and Latvia* was concluded in Riga on August 11, 1920.  
p. 270

- <sup>108</sup> *The Political Bureau* and the *Organising Bureau* of the R.C.P.(B.) Central Committee were set up as standing bodies on March 25, 1919, at the first plenary meeting of the Central Committee, elected by the Eighth Congress of the Party, in conformity with the Congress resolution on questions of organisation. p. 272
- <sup>109</sup> The reference is to the reports of the Central Committee and its departments published in *Bulletin of the R.C.P.(B.) Central Committee* in March 1920, before the Ninth Congress of the R.C.P.(B.). p. 273
- <sup>110</sup> Lenin refers to the White terror that set in in Finland after the suppression of the revolution there in May 1918. Over 90 thousand people were thrown into prisons and concentration camps; nearly 18 thousand people were executed and as many died of hunger and tortures. p. 277
- <sup>111</sup> On March 25, 1920, the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland proposed to the Soviet Government to demarcate the frontier, which was in fact tantamount to starting negotiations on peace. The Soviet-Finnish Peace Treaty was signed on October 14, 1920. p. 279
- <sup>112</sup> Poland's agreement to begin negotiations was merely a manoeuvre to cover her preparations for a war against Soviet Russia. Only on March 21, 1920 did the Polish Government agree to the Soviet Government's numerous proposals for negotiations (December 22, 1919, January 28, February 2, and March 6, 1920), and it suggested that negotiations should be started in the front-line town of Borisov, and that military operations should cease only in that sector. Soviet proposals to suspend all military operations and transfer the place of negotiations to any neutral country met with a reply from the Polish Government which was equivalent to an ultimatum. The Polish reactionaries sabotaged the negotiations and began hostilities against the Soviet Republic on April 25.  
In the autumn of 1920, as a result of the Red Army's successes, the Polish Government had to agree to sign a peace treaty. An armistice was concluded on October 12, 1920; the Peace Treaty was signed on March 18, 1921. p. 279
- <sup>113</sup> The reference is to the military-monarchist coup d'état, the so-called Kapp Putsch, carried out by the German reactionary militarists. It was organised by the monarchist landowner Kapp and Generals Ludendorff, Seeckt and Lüttwitz with the obvious connivance of the Social Democratic government. On March 13, 1920, the insurgents moved troops against Berlin and, encountering no resistance from the government, proclaimed a military dictatorship. German workers replied with a general strike. Under their pressure the Kapp government fell on March 17, and the Social-Democrats resumed state power. p. 279
- <sup>114</sup> See Note 47. p. 281
- <sup>115</sup> *Bulletin of the Central Committee of the Russian Communist Party (Bolsheviks)*—an information bulletin of the C.C. dealing with questions of Party life; founded by a decision of the Eighth Congress of the R.C.P.(B.), it began to appear in Moscow from May 28, 1919. Its first issues came out as weekly supplements to the newspaper *Pravda* (The Truth), and in October 1920 the bulletin began to be published separately. p. 287

- <sup>116</sup> Lenin refers to the newspaper *Kommunistichesky Subbotnik* issued on the initiative of the Moscow Committee of the R.C.P.(B.) on April 11, 1920. The material for it was collected during the subbotnik on April 10 by the editors of and contributors to the Moscow newspapers *Pravda*, *Izvestia*, *Bednota*, *Ekonomicheskaya Zhizn*, *Kommunistichesky Trud* and the ROSTA telegraph agency, and it was distributed on April 11 among the participants in the Sunday voluntary work. p. 288
- <sup>117</sup> The pamphlet *Weltrevolution* (World Revolution) was written by Otto Bauer. p. 292
- <sup>118</sup> *Iskra* (The Spark)—the first all-Russia illegal Marxist newspaper founded by Lenin in 1900. It played a decisive role in founding a working-class revolutionary Marxist party in Russia.  
Soon after the Second Congress of the Party in July-August 1903, Mensheviks, supported by G. V. Plekhanov, took control of *Iskra*, and beginning with issue No. 52 it ceased to be an organ of revolutionary Marxism. p. 292
- <sup>119</sup> The reference is to the Mensheviks—Right-wing opportunists in the R.S.D.L.P.—and to the Socialist-Revolutionaries (S.R.s). See notes 5 and 6. p. 295
- <sup>120</sup> This refers to the shooting of unarmed workers in the Lena goldfields (Siberia) on April 4 (17), 1912. The news of the Lena massacre stirred the working class of Russia. Mass demonstrations, meetings and strikes swept over the country. p. 297
- <sup>121</sup> At the Duma's session on July 26 (August 8), 1914, the Bolshevik group protested against the entry of tsarist Russia into the imperialist war. It refused to vote for war credits and started revolutionary propaganda among the masses. In November 1914 the Bolshevik deputies were arrested and in February 1915 they were tried and sentenced to life imprisonment in Eastern Siberia. Their courageous speeches at their trial exposed the autocracy, and played an important role in anti-war propaganda and in revolutionising the class-consciousness of the working people. p. 297
- <sup>122</sup> *The Independent Labour Party of Britain* (I.L.P.)—a reformist organisation founded in 1893 by leaders of the "new trade unions" and headed by Keir Hardie and Ramsay MacDonald. The I.L.P. laid main stress on parliamentary forms of struggle and parliamentary deals with the Liberal Party.  
In 1920 the I.L.P. withdrew from the Second International and joined the so-called Two-and-a-Half International. p. 298
- <sup>123</sup> *Fabians*—members of the Fabian Society, a British reformist organisation founded in 1884. Its members were mainly bourgeois intellectuals—scholars, writers, political figures (Sidney and Beatrice Webb, Ramsay MacDonald, Bernard Shaw, and others). The Fabians denied the necessity of the proletariat's class struggle and the socialist revolution and held that the transition from capitalism to socialism was possible only through petty reforms, by the gradual reorganisation of society. In 1920 the society joined the Liberal Party. p. 298
- <sup>124</sup> *Ministerialism* ("ministerial socialism", or Millerandism)—the opportunist tactics of the socialists' participation in reactionary bourgeois governments. The term appeared in 1899, when the French socialist Millerand became a member of the bourgeois government of Waldeck-Rousseau. p. 298

<sup>125</sup> See Note 70.

p. 299

<sup>126</sup> The reference is probably made to Lenin's article "What Should Not Be Copied from the German Labour Movement", published in the Bolshevik magazine *Prosveshcheniye* (Enlightenment) in April 1914, in which he exposed the treacherous behaviour of Karl Legien, a German Social-Democrat, who in addressing the Congress of the U.S.A. during his visit to America in 1912, praised official circles and bourgeois parties. p. 302

<sup>127</sup> This refers to Engels' letter to August Bebel of March 18-28, 1875 (Marx and Engels, *Selected Works*, Vol. 3, Moscow, 1973, pp. 31-37). p. 302

<sup>128</sup> The reference is to the otzovists (from the Russian word *otzvat* meaning "to recall") and ultimatumists, the struggle against whom developed in 1908 and in 1909 and resulted in the expulsion of the otzovist leader A. Bogdanov from the Bolshevik Party. Under cover of revolutionary phrases the otzovists demanded the recall of the Social-Democratic deputies from the Third Duma and the cessation of activities in legal organisations—trade unions, cooperatives, etc. Ultimatumism was a variety of otzovism. The ultimatumists did not understand the necessity for persistent day-by-day work with the Social-Democratic deputies to make them consistent revolutionary parliamentarians. They proposed that an ultimatum should be presented to the Social-Democratic group in the Duma, demanding their absolute subordination to the Party's Central Committee decisions. Should the deputies fail to comply, they were to be recalled from the Duma. A conference of the enlarged editorial board of the Bolshevik newspaper *Proletary* in June 1909 pointed out in its decision that "Bolshevism, as a definite trend in the R.S.D.L.P., has nothing in common either with otzovism or with ultimatumism" and urged the Bolsheviks "to wage a most resolute struggle against these deviations from the path of revolutionary Marxism". p. 302

<sup>129</sup> On August 6 (19), 1905, a manifesto of the tsar was made public proclaiming the law on the setting up of the Duma and the election procedures. This body received the name of the Bulygin Duma, after A. G. Bulygin, the Minister of the Interior, whom the tsar entrusted with drawing up the Duma draft. According to this draft, the Duma had no legislative functions, but could merely discuss certain questions as a consultative body under the tsar. The Bolsheviks called upon the workers and peasants to actively boycott the Bulygin Duma and concentrate all agitation on the slogans of an armed uprising, a revolutionary army and a Provisional Revolutionary Government. The boycott campaign was used by the Bolsheviks to mobilise all the revolutionary forces, organise mass political strikes and prepare for an armed uprising. The mounting revolutionary tide and the all-Russia October political strike of 1905 swept away the Bulygin Duma before it was convened. p. 303

<sup>130</sup> The reference is to the all-Russia October political strike of 1905, during the first Russian revolution. The strike involved over two million people and was conducted under the slogan of the overthrow of autocracy, active boycott of the Bulygin Duma, convocation of a Constituent Assembly and establishment of a democratic republic. The all-Russia political strike demonstrated the strength of the working-class movement and gave an impetus to the revolutionary struggle in the countryside the army and the navy. p. 303

<sup>131</sup> *Labourites* (Labourists)—members of the British Labour Party, founded in 1900 as an association of trade unions, socialist organisations and groups

with the aim of securing the election of workers' representatives to Parliament (Labour Representation Committee). In 1906 the Committee changed its name to Labour Party. Members of trade unions are automatically members of the Labour Party provided they pay Party dues. Since the very inception of the Party its leaders have pursued a policy of class collaboration with the bourgeoisie. During the First World War the leaders of the Party (Arthur Henderson and others) adopted a social-chauvinist stand and entered the government. With their active support the latter passed a series of anti-labour laws (on militarisation of the country, etc.). Labour leaders very often stood at the helm of government. p. 304

- <sup>132</sup> *The "opposition on principle"*—a group of German "Left" Communists advocating anarcho-syndicalist views. The Second Congress of the Communist Party of Germany, held in Heidelberg in 1919, expelled the members of the opposition, who then formed the so-called Communist Workers' Party of Germany (C.W.P.G.) in April 1920.

To facilitate the unification of all German communist forces and meet the interests of the finest proletarian elements in the C.W.P.G., the opposition was provisionally admitted into the Communist International in November 1920 with the rights of a sympathising member. However, the Comintern's Executive Committee considered the United Communist Party of Germany (U.C.P.G.) as the only authoritative section of the Comintern. C.W.P.G. representatives were admitted into the Comintern on the condition that they merged with the U.C.P.G. and supported all its actions. But the C.W.P.G. leaders failed to observe these conditions. The Third Comintern Congress (June-July 1921), striving to win over the workers who still followed the C.W.P.G. leaders, resolved to give the party two months to call a congress and settle the question of affiliation. The C.W.P.G. leaders did not comply with the Third Congress resolution and thus placed themselves outside the Communist International. Later this party degenerated into a small sectarian group without any support in the working class. p. 306

- <sup>133</sup> *Kommunistische Arbeiterzeitung* (The Communist Workers' Newspaper)—organ of the anarcho-syndicalist group of German "Left" Communists, published in Hamburg from 1919 to 1927. The Karl Ecker mentioned by Lenin was Heinrich Lautenberg's pen-name. p. 309

- <sup>134</sup> The reference is to the *League of Struggle for the Emancipation of the Working Class* organised by V. I. Lenin in the autumn of 1895. Unitng nearly twenty Marxist circles in St. Petersburg, the League was headed by the Central Group. Five members of this group headed by Lenin directed the League's activities. The organisation was divided into district groups. Progressive, more class-conscious workers (I. V. Babushkin, V. A. Shelgunov and others) linked these groups with the factories.

The St. Petersburg League of Struggle for the Emancipation of the Working Class was, in Lenin's words, the embryo of a revolutionary party based on the working-class movement and giving leadership to the class struggle of the proletariat. p. 311

- <sup>135</sup> *Trudoviki*—a group of petty-bourgeois democrats in the Dumas consisting of peasants and Narodnik-minded intellectuals. p. 312

- <sup>136</sup> After the bourgeois-democratic revolution in February 1917 until 1919 inclusively the Party's membership changed as follows: by the Seventh (April) All-Russia Conference of the R.S.D.L.P.(B.) in 1917 the Party numbered 80,000 members; by the Sixth R.S.D.L.P.(B.) Congress (July-

August 1917) about 240,000; by the Seventh Congress of the R.C.P.(B.) (March 1918) not less than 300,000; and by the Eighth Congress of the R.C.P.(B.) (March 1919) 313,766 members. p. 313

- <sup>137</sup> The reference is to the *Party Week*, which was held in accordance with the resolution of the Eighth Congress of the R.C.P.(B.) on enlarging the membership of the Party. The Party Week was conducted in conditions of bitter struggle by the Soviet people against the foreign military intervention and internal counter-revolution. It was held in Party organisations in August-November 1919. As a result of the Party Weeks, in 38 gubernias of the European part of the R.S.F.S.R. over 200,000 joined the Party, more than half of them being industrial workers, while at the fronts about one quarter of the army and navy personnel joined the Party. As Lenin wrote, the workers and peasants who joined the party at such a critical moment "constitute a fine and reliable body of leaders of the revolutionary proletariat and of the non-exploiting section of the peasantry" (*Collected Works*, Vol. 30, p. 404). p. 313
- <sup>138</sup> See Note 25. p. 317
- <sup>139</sup> *The Communist International*—organ of the Executive Committee of the Communist International. The first issue appeared on May 1, 1919. This journal published theoretical articles and Comintern documents. p. 317
- <sup>140</sup> See Engels' letter to Marx of October 7, 1858 (Marx and Engels, *Selected Correspondence*, Moscow, 1965, p. 110). p. 317
- <sup>141</sup> *Folkets Dagblad Politiken* (People's Political Daily)—organ of the Swedish Left Social-Democratic Party. p. 318
- <sup>142</sup> *The Industrial Workers of the World (I.W.W.)*—a trade union organisation of U.S. workers, was founded in 1905 and united in the main unskilled and low-paid workers of various trades. The I.W.W. organised a number of successful mass strikes and opposed the policy of class collaboration pursued by the reformist leaders of the American Federation of Labor and the Right-wing socialists. During the First World War the I.W.W. participated in a number of anti-war mass actions of the American working class. Some I.W.W. leaders (William Haywood among them) welcomed the October Socialist Revolution in Russia and joined the Communist Party of the U.S.A. However, anarcho-sindicalist features showed up in I.W.W. activities; it denied the necessity of political struggle by the proletariat, refused to carry on work among the members of the American Federation of Labor, and so on. Subsequently the I.W.W. degenerated into a sectarian organisation and lost all influence on the working-class movement. p. 319
- <sup>143</sup> The congress of the Communist Party of Germany, on December 30, 1918 discussed the question of participation in the elections to the National Assembly. Karl Liebknecht and Rosa Luxemburg were in favour of such participation and showed the need for making use of the parliamentary platform to spread revolutionary slogans among the masses. But the congress majority opposed participation in the elections and adopted a resolution to the effect. p. 321
- <sup>144</sup> *Il Soviet*—a newspaper of the Italian Socialist Party published in Naples from 1918 to 1922. In 1920 it began to appear as the organ of the communist-abstentionist group of the Socialist Party. p. 323



- <sup>145</sup> *Comunismo*—a fortnightly journal of the Italian Socialist Party, published under the editorship of Giacinto Serrati in Milan from 1919 to 1922. p. 328
- <sup>146</sup> *The Italian Socialist Party* was founded in 1892. From the very first days, a bitter ideological struggle between the revolutionary and the opportunist trend was waged within the party. After the October Socialist Revolution in Russia, the Left wing of the I.S.P. grew stronger, and the 16th congress of the party held in Bologna on October 5-8, 1919, adopted a resolution to affiliate with the Third International. I.S.P. representatives took part in the Second Congress of the Comintern. After the congress, Centrist Serrati, head of the delegation, declared against a break with the reformists. At the 17th Party Congress in Leghorn in January 1921, the Centrists, who were in the majority, refused to break with the reformists and to accept all the Terms of Admission into the Comintern. On January 21 the Left-wing delegates walked out of the congress and founded the Communist Party of Italy. p. 328
- <sup>147</sup> Soviet power was established in Hungary on March 21, 1919. The socialist revolution in Hungary was a peaceful one, the Hungarian bourgeoisie being unable to resist the people. Incapable of coping with the internal and external difficulties, it decided to hand over power for a while to the Right-wing Social-Democrats, so as to prevent the development of the revolution. However, by that time the prestige of the Hungarian Communist Party had grown so greatly among the masses, and the demands of the rank-and-file Social-Democrats for unity with the Communists had become so insistent that the Social-Democratic leaders proposed to the arrested leaders of the Communist Party that they should set up a joint government. The S.D. leaders were compelled to accept the terms advanced by the Communists during the negotiations—formation of a Soviet government, disarmament of the bourgeoisie, creation of a Red Army and people's militia, confiscation of the landowners' estates, nationalisation of industry, an alliance with Soviet Russia, etc. Simultaneously, an agreement was signed on the merger of the two parties into the Socialist Party of Hungary. In the process of merging errors were made which had their effects later. The merger was carried out mechanically, without isolation of the reformist elements.
- The imperialists of the Entente met the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat in Hungary with hostility. They organised armed intervention against the Hungarian Soviet Republic.
- The unfavourable international situation in the summer of 1919, when Soviet Russia was surrounded by enemies and therefore could not help the Hungarian Soviet Republic, also had a negative effect. On August 1, 1919, as a result of joint actions by the foreign imperialist intervention and the counter-revolution at home, Soviet power in Hungary was overthrown. p. 328
- <sup>148</sup> See Note 57. p. 329
- <sup>149</sup> *Der Volksstaat* (People's State)—central organ of the German Social-Democratic Party (the Eisenach Party), published in Leipzig in 1863-76 and edited by Wilhelm Liebknecht. p. 329
- <sup>150</sup> Lenin refers to a passage from Engels' letter to F. A. Sorge of November 29, 1886, in which, criticising the sectarian character of the activities of the German Social-Democrats living in exile in America, Engels wrote that for them the theory was "a credo, not a guide to action" (Marx and Engels, *Selected Correspondence*, Moscow, 1965, p. 395). p. 332

- <sup>151</sup> In his review of *Letters to the President of the United States*, a book by the American economist C. Carey, N. G. Chernyshevsky wrote: "The path of history is not like the pavement of the Nevsky Prospekt; it runs entirely through dusty or muddy fields, through marshes and dense forests. Whoever is afraid of being covered with dust or of soiling his boots with mud, let him not engage in public activities." p. 332
- <sup>152</sup> This refers to the international socialist conferences in Zimmerwald and Kienthal (Switzerland).  
*The Zimmerwald, or First International Socialist Conference* took place on September 5-8, 1915 (see Note 44).  
*The Kienthal, or the Second International Socialist Conference* was held on April 24-30, 1916.  
 Both these conferences contributed to the ideological unity, on the basis of Marxism-Leninism, of the Left-wing elements in the international Social-Democratic movement, who later played an active part in setting up Communist Parties in their countries and founding the Third, Communist International. p. 333
- <sup>153</sup> See Note 53.  
 "Revolutionary Communists"—a group which broke away from the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries after the latter's revolt in July 1918. In September 1918 the group formed the "Party of Revolutionary Communism", which favoured co-operation with the R.C.P.(B.) and pledged support for the Soviet government. The "Revolutionary Communists" admitted that Soviet rule created preconditions for the establishment of a socialist system, but at the same time they denied the necessity of the dictatorship of the proletariat in the period of transition from capitalism to socialism. In September 1920, following the decision of the Comintern's Second Congress that there must be only one Communist Party in each country, the "Party of Revolutionary Communism" adopted a decision to join the R.C.P.(B.). p. 333
- <sup>154</sup> See Note 48. p. 333
- <sup>155</sup> See Note 97. p. 336
- <sup>156</sup> *The British Socialist Party* (B.S.P.) was founded in Manchester in 1911 as a result of the union of the Social-Democratic Party with other socialist groups. The B.S.P. conducted agitation in the spirit of Marxism, and, as Lenin wrote, it was "not opportunist and was really independent of the Liberals" (*Collected Works*, Vol. 19, p. 273). The B.S.P. welcomed the October Socialist Revolution in Russia, and its members played a great role in the campaign of the British working people in defence of Soviet Russia from foreign intervention. In 1919, the bulk of the party's organisations (98 against 4) declared in favour of affiliation with the Communist International. The B.S.P., together with the Communist Unity Group, played an important part in founding the Communist Party of Great Britain. p. 337
- <sup>157</sup> *The Socialist Labour Party*--a revolutionary Marxist organisation founded in 1903 in Scotland by a group of Left Social-Democrats who had broken away from the Social-Democratic Federation; the bulk of its members were Scottish.  
*The South Wales Socialist Society*--a small group consisting mainly of Welsh revolutionary-minded coal miners. It began its activities during

the movement for reforms in coal mining, which grew stronger already on the eve of the First World War.

*The Workers' Socialist Federation* was a small organisation which emerged in May 1918 from the Women's Suffrage League and consisted mostly of women.

These three organisations, which made sectarian errors, did not join the Communist Party of Great Britain when it was formed (at the Inaugural Congress on July 31 and August 1, 1920), since the party's programme contained a clause on the party's participation in parliamentary elections and on affiliation with the Labour Party. In January 1921, the South Wales Socialist Society and the Workers' Socialist Federation, the latter having by that time assumed the name of the Communist Party (British Section of the Third International), united with the Communist Party of Great Britain. The leaders of the Socialist Labour Party refused to join. p. 337

- <sup>158</sup> *Workers' Dreadnought* was published in London from March 1914 to June 1924. Until July 1917 it appeared under the name of *Woman's Dreadnought*. When in 1918 the Workers' Socialist Federation was founded this paper became its mouthpiece. p. 338

- <sup>159</sup> *The Manchester Guardian*—a bourgeois-liberal newspaper founded in 1821, one of the most popular and influential British bourgeois newspapers. p. 340

- <sup>160</sup> See Note 31. p. 350

- <sup>161</sup> See Note 113 p. 350

- <sup>162</sup> See Note 16. p. 354

- <sup>163</sup> *Die Rote Fahne* (Red Banner)—a newspaper founded by Karl Liebknecht and Rosa Luxemburg as the central organ of the Spartacus League; later it became the central organ of the Communist Party of Germany. It started publication in November 1918. After the establishment of the fascist dictatorship the *Rote Fahne* was suppressed but continued to appear illegally. In 1935 its publication was transferred to Prague; from October 1936 until the autumn of 1939 it was published in Brussels. p. 362

- <sup>164</sup> See Note 69. p. 364

- <sup>165</sup> *Die Rote Fahne* (Red Banner)—a newspaper, the central organ of the Communist Party of Austria, published in Vienna from November 1918. From 1933 it had to appear illegally; in February 1957 it began publication as *Volksstimme* (Voice of the People). p. 364

- <sup>166</sup> "Soviet pleaders"—collegiums of advocates established in February 1918 under the Soviets of Workers', Soldiers', Peasants' and Cossacks' Deputies. In October 1920, these collegiums were abolished. p. 368

- <sup>167</sup> On the basis of this directive from Lenin, the words "certain members of the Communist Party of Holland" have been substituted in the present edition for the expression "Dutch Tribunists" p. 369

- <sup>168</sup> *Pan-Islamism*—a religious and political ideology preaching the unity of all peoples professing the Mohammedan religion (Islam). At the end of the last century it was widespread among the exploiting classes in the countries of the East; it was used by Turkey to secure submission of

Moslems throughout the world to the Turkish sultan as the "Khalif of all true believers".

By means of Pan-Islamism the ruling classes of the Mohammedan peoples tried to strengthen their positions and suppress the revolutionary movement of the working people of the Eastern countries. p. 372

160 Sec Note 85.

p. 374

170 As a result of mass action by the Lettish proletariat and peasantry against the German invaders and the counter-revolutionary government of Ulmanis, a provisional Soviet Government was established in Latvia on December 17, 1918, and issued a Manifesto on the transfer of state power to the Soviets.

In March 1919, German troops and whiteguards, armed and equipped by the imperialists of the U.S.A. and the Entente, attacked Soviet Latvia. By January 1920, after fierce fighting, the counter-revolutionary bourgeoisie established a regime of terror. p. 374

171 Lenin refers to J. Marchlewski's article "The Agrarian Question and World Revolution" published in the journal *The Communist International* No. 12, July 20, 1920. Lenin read the article before the issue appeared. p. 378

172 Lenin refers to the Second (Berne) International, formed at a conference of socialist parties in February 1919 by the leaders of the West European socialist parties in place of the Second International, which ceased to exist after the outbreak of the First World War. p. 378

173 *The Second Congress of the Communist International*, which laid the bases for the programme, tactical and organisational principles of the Communist International, met in Soviet Russia from July 19 to August 7, 1920. The Congress opened in Petrograd; the subsequent sittings, from July 23, were held in Moscow. It was attended by 169 delegates with the right to vote and 49 delegates with voice but no vote, representing 67 workers' organisations from 37 countries. Apart from delegates representing the Communist parties and organisations of 31 countries, there were delegates from the Independent Social-Democratic Party of Germany, the Socialist parties of Italy and France, the Industrial Workers of the World (Australia, England and Ireland), the National Confederation of Labour of Spain, and other organisations.

At the opening sitting Lenin made a speech on the international situation and the basic tasks of the Comintern. At the subsequent sittings he delivered speeches and reports on the Communist Party, on the national and colonial questions, on parliamentarism, and on other questions. He also took an active part in the work of the majority of the Congress commissions.

All the decisions of the Congress were based on the ideas of Lenin's classical work "*Left-Wing Communism—an Infantile Disorder*". The Congress approved as the resolution on the first question Lenin's "Theses on the Fundamental Tasks of the Second Congress of the Communist International". Among the basic questions discussed at the Congress were the role of the Communist Party in the proletarian revolution and the relations between the Party and the working class. In the resolution "On the Role of the Communist Party in the Proletarian Revolution", drawn up with Lenin's active participation, the Congress pointed out that the Communist Party is the main and basic instrument for the liberation of the working class. Lenin's theses on the national and colonial question and the agrarian question were endorsed as Congress decisions.

The Congress adopted twenty-one terms of admission into the Communist International, drawn up by Lenin, which was of great importance for creating and strengthening parties of a new type in the working-class movement of capitalist countries. p. 389

<sup>174</sup> *The Times*—a daily newspaper founded in London in 1785, one of the biggest conservative newspapers of the British bourgeoisie. p. 394

<sup>175</sup> *The Bulletin of the People's Commissariat of Foreign Affairs* was published in Moscow from June 20, 1919 to June 1922. p. 395

<sup>176</sup> This international organisation was being set up at the time by the Centrist socialist parties and groups which had left the Second International under pressure from the revolutionary masses. Known as the Two-and-a-Half or Vienna International (its official name being the International Union of the Socialist Parties), it was founded at a conference in Vienna in February 1921. Professing opposition to the Second International, the leaders of the Two-and-a-Half International actually pursued the same opportunist and splitting policy in the working class on all the most important questions of the proletarian movement and tried to use the new organisation to counterbalance the growing influence of the Communists among the workers.

In May 1923 the Second and the Two-and-a-Half International united to form the so-called Socialist Labour International. p. 397

<sup>177</sup> "Fourteen Points"—the demagogical "peace programme" advanced by U.S. President Wilson in January 1918. p. 395

<sup>178</sup> *Guild socialists* or guild socialism—a reformist trend in the British trade unions, which arose before the First World War. The guild socialists denied the class character of the state and sowed among the workers illusions that it was possible to get rid of exploitation without the class struggle, by establishing, on the basis of the existing trade unions, special associations of producers, so-called guilds, and transferring industrial management to these organisations united into a federation. In this way the guild socialists hoped gradually to build up socialist society.

After the October Socialist Revolution in Russia, the guild socialists stepped up their propaganda, striving to contrapose the "theory" of guild socialism to the ideas of the class struggle and the dictatorship of the proletariat. In the 1920s guild socialism lost all its influence on the British working class. p. 401

<sup>179</sup> *The commission on the national and colonial questions* was set up at the Second Congress of the Communist International and consisted of 20 members representing Britain, Austria, Bulgaria, Hungary, Germany, Holland, India, Indonesia, Iran, Ireland, China, Korea, Mexico, Russia, the U.S.A., Turkey, France and Yugoslavia. Headed by Lenin, the commission began its work on July 25, 1920 by discussing his theses on the national and colonial questions which were submitted for consideration by the Congress on July 26. Apart from this, the commission and the plenary meetings of the Congress discussed additional theses proposed by Manabendra Nath Roy. p. 405

<sup>180</sup> See Note 4. p. 407

<sup>181</sup> Lenin refers to the views, alien to Marxism, which were spread under the name of "proletarian culture" by members of the Proletkult, a cultural and educational organisation. Founded in September 1917 as an indepen-

dent organisation, the Proletkult continued to insist on independence even after the October Revolution thus setting itself in opposition to the proletarian state. Its members actually denied the cultural legacy of the past strove to isolate themselves from the tasks of cultural educational work among the masses and to create a special 'proletarian culture' by 'laboratory means'. Paying lip service to Marxism A. A. Bogaanov, the Proletkult's chief ideologist, actually preached subjective idealism. Machism. Proletkult was not a homogeneous organisation for it included besides bourgeois intellectuals who held leading positions in many of its organisations, also young workers who sincerely wished to promote cultural development in the Soviet state. Proletkult organisations had their heyday in 1919 and declined in the early twenties. In 1932 the Proletkult ceased to exist.

- <sup>19</sup> The draft resolution 'On Proletarian Culture' was drawn up by Lenin for the First All Russia Congress of the Proletkult which was held in Moscow from October 5 to 12 1920. When the Political Bureau of the C C R C P (B) discussed the question of the Proletkult at its sessions on October 9-11 it proceeded from Lenin's draft resolution. It proposed that the Communist group at the Congress should adopt an international resolution putting central and local Proletkult organisations under the control of the People's Commissariat of Education. This resolution was in keeping with Lenin's instructions and was unanimously adopted by the Congress. But after the Congress some Proletkult leaders voiced a discontent with the resolution and tried to misinterpret it to the rank and file alleging that the R C P (B) Central Committee was limiting the workers' initiative in the sphere of the arts and wanted to dissolve Proletkult organisations. The R C P (B) Central Committee refuted these false and social insinuations in its letter 'On Proletkult Organisation' (published in *Pravda* No. 270 December 1 1920) which gave a detailed analysis of Proletkult errors.

- <sup>20</sup> The report about A. V. Lunacharsky's speech at the Proletkult Congress delivered on October 7 1920 said: 'Comrade Lunacharsky pointed out that Proletkult must be assured a special status and complete autonomy' (*Izvestia* No. 224 October 8 1920). Recalling this episode Lunacharsky wrote in his reminiscences: 'At the time of the Proletkult Congress in October 1920 Vladimir Ilyich instructed me to attend it and pointed out quite definitely that Proletkult should be subordinated to the People's Commissariat of Education. I did regard itself as an official institution and so on. In short Vladimir Ilyich wanted us to bring Proletkult closer to the state. At the same time he took steps to bring it closer to the Party. I spoke at the Congress in a rather non-committal and contradictory way and the version sent to Vladimir Ilyich was very mild'. He summoned me and gave me a good talking to.

- <sup>21</sup> The decree of the Council of People's Commissars 'On the Chief Committee for Political Education of the Republic' (*Glavpolitprosvet*) was signed by Lenin on November 12 1920.

*Glavpolitprosvet* concentrated in its hands all political education and propaganda and agitation work supervised mass cultural education of the adult population (elimination of illiteracy school clubs libraries reading rooms) and Party education (communist higher educational establishments and Party schools). Nadezhda Krupskaya headed the organisation. In June 1930 *Glavpolitprosvet* was reorganised into a sector of mass work of the People's Commissariat of Education.

- <sup>185</sup> This draft provided the basis for the resolution on the tasks of the trade union movement which was passed by the R.C.P.(B.) group of the Fifth All-Russia Conference of Trade Unions on November 8, 1920, and published in *Pravda* on November 13.

*The Fifth All-Russia Conference of Trade Unions* took place in Moscow on November 2-6, 1920, the official opening sitting being held on November 3. It was attended by 202 delegates with the right to vote and 59 delegates with voice but no vote. In keeping with the tasks of peaceful socialist construction, the Conference raised the question of reorganising the work of the trade unions and extending the democratic principles of their organisation and work. At a sitting of the communist group on November 3, Trotsky came out against the transition to the new methods of work. He demanded that the trade unions should be immediately governmentalised and advocated military methods of management and administration in the trade unions. Trotsky's speech, which sparked off a discussion in the Party, was rebuffed by the communist delegates. p. 435

- <sup>186</sup> *Tsektran—The Central Committee of the Joint Trade Union of Rail and Water Transport Workers*—was formed in September 1920. The amalgamation of the two transport unions was necessitated by the need to provide a stable centralised leadership capable of ensuring the speedy rehabilitation of transport, whose dislocation threatened to disrupt the country's economy. *Tsektran* did much to rehabilitate transport, but subsequently it degenerated into a bureaucratic organisation out of touch with the trade union rank and file. The red tape, the purely administrative methods, arbitrary appointments and the renunciation of democratic methods of work cultivated by the Trotskyists who had taken over the leadership in *Tsektran* all tended to split the transport workers and set them against the Party. The Central Committee of the Party condemned these reprehensible methods. The plenary meetings of the R.C.P.(B.) Central Committee on November 8 and December 7, 1920, decided to incorporate *Tsektran* in the system of the All-Russia Central Council of Trade Unions on an equal footing with the other trade unions and recommended it to change its methods of work with a view to extending trade union democracy. The First All-Russia Congress of Transport Workers, convened by the Party Central Committee in March 1921, expelled the Trotskyists from the union leadership and outlined new methods of work. p. 435

- <sup>187</sup> Fearing utter defeat, bourgeois-landowner Poland signed an armistice on October 12, 1920. The final peace treaty between the R.S.F.S.R. and the Ukrainian S.S.R., on the one hand, and Poland, on the other, was signed in Riga on March 18, 1921. p. 438

- <sup>188</sup> Lenin refers to the French Government which, on August 10, 1920, officially recognised Wrangel as "the governor of the South of Russia". p. 438

- <sup>189</sup> Lenin refers to the peace treaties with Estonia (signed February 2, 1920), Latvia (signed August 11, 1920) and Finland (signed October 14, 1920). p. 439

- <sup>190</sup> The agreement, which established friendly relations between the R.S.F.S.R. and Persia (Iran), was signed in Moscow on February 26, 1921. It revoked all the treaties concluded by tsarist Russia with Persia and third parties which infringed on the sovereignty of the Persian people. The Soviet Government renounced all the former concessions on Persian territory and its claims concerning the loans granted to Persia by the tsarist government. Of special importance were the articles obliging both parties not to allow

- the formation or the existence on their territories of organisations or groups having as their aim the struggle against Russia or Persia. This was the first equal treaty in the history of Persia. p. 440
- <sup>191</sup> *Councils of Action* were set up by the British workers to prevent Britain from participating in the war against Soviet Russia. They began to appear early in August 1920; by the end of the month there were more than 150 such organisations and in a month their number had doubled. The Communist Party of Great Britain played an important role in organising Councils of Action. p. 441
- <sup>192</sup> Lenin refers to the pamphlet "*On Concessions, The Decree of the Council of People's Commissars dated November 23, 1920*", State Publishing House, Moscow, 1920. p. 442
- <sup>193</sup> *The Council of Defence (The Council of Workers' and Peasants' Defence)* was set up by the All-Russia Central Executive Committee on November 30, 1918, and was vested with full powers to mobilise all resources for the defence of the country. In April 1920, it was reorganised into the Council of Labour and Defence (C.L.D.). By a decision of the Eighth All-Russia Congress of Soviets in December 1920 the C.L.D. began to operate as a commission of the Council of People's Commissars responsible for coordinating the work of all economic departments. The C.L.D. existed until 1937. p. 444
- <sup>194</sup> The reference is to the Bill "Measures for the Consolidation and Development of Peasant Farming" adopted by the Eighth All-Russia Congress of Soviets. It provided both for measures of state regulation in the development of agriculture and for the peasants' personal interest in raising the productivity of their farms. p. 450
- <sup>195</sup> The reference is to the book *Three Years of Struggle against Famine*. Brief report on the work of the People's Commissariat of Food for 1919-20, Moscow, 1920. p. 453
- <sup>196</sup> Order No. 1042 on rehabilitating transport was issued by the Chief Department of Railways on May 22, 1920. Railway depots were ordered to lower the percentage of locomotives under repair from 60 to 20 per cent in four and a half years (beginning from July 1, 1920) p. 456
- <sup>197</sup> The reference is to S. I. Gusev's pamphlet *The Single Economic Plan and the Single Economic Apparatus* issued for the Eighth All-Russia Congress of Soviets. His previous pamphlet *Immediate Questions of Economic Construction (On the Theses of the Central Committee of the R.C.P.)* was published for the Ninth Party Congress and was highly commended by Lenin in his report to the Ninth Congress of March 29, 1920. p. 457
- <sup>198</sup> Nearly 200 prominent scientists and technicians were enlisted in the work of drawing up a plan for the electrification of Russia. G. M. Krzhizhanovsky was chairman of GOELRO, the State Commission for the Electrification of the Country, and its activity was directed by Lenin. p. 459
- <sup>199</sup> *Sukharevka*—a market near the Sukharev Tower built in 1692. It was a centre of black marketeering and a symbol of "free", private trade. By a decision of the Presidium of the Moscow Soviet adopted on December 13, 1920, the market was closed. p. 460



- <sup>200</sup> The pamphlet was written by Lenin in connection with the discussion in the Party of the role and tasks of the trade unions. Lenin had completed the pamphlet by January 25, 1921, and the same day it was sent to the printer's. Late at night on January 26, part of the copies were distributed to members of the Party Central Committee who were leaving for the localities to take part in the discussion on the trade unions.

Trotsky was the instigator of the discussion and the campaign against the Party's policy. The discussion went far beyond the question of the role of the trade unions; in fact it dealt with the future of the dictatorship of the proletariat and socialism in Russia.

Lenin and his followers vigorously fought the opposition, directing the chief blow against the Trotskyists as the main force of the anti-Party groups. Lenin's first contribution to the discussion was his speech on "The Trade Unions, the Present Situation and Trotsky's Mistakes" on December 30, 1920, at a joint meeting of Communists' delegates to the Eighth Congress of Soviets, Communist members of the All-Russia Central Council of Trade Unions and of the Moscow City Council of Trade Unions. On January 21, 1921, *Pravda* published Lenin's article "The Party Crisis", in which he set forth the essence and basic stages of the discussion and exposed the factional, splitting activities of the anti-Party groups. Of great importance in the struggle against the opposition was his report on "The Role and Tasks of the Trade Unions" delivered at a meeting of the Communist group of the Second All-Russia Congress of Miners on January 23, 1921.

The Trotskyists and other oppositionists were defeated in the discussion. The Party organisations rallied around Lenin and supported his platform, set out in his "Draft Decision of the Tenth Congress of the R.C.P. on the Role and Tasks of the Trade Unions". This document defined the role of the trade unions as that of a school of administration, a school of management and a school of communism. It also pointed out that the chief method of work in the trade unions was that of persuasion as a method of proletarian democracy within the trade unions; their tasks was to rally the entire working class for socialist construction. p. 465

- <sup>201</sup> The "buffer group"—one of the anti Party groups in the discussion on the trade unions in 1920-21. It was headed by N.I. Bukharin and was so called because it tried to reconcile Leninism with Trotskyism, acting as a "buffer" in the conflict between the two platforms, but in fact it defended and covered up the Trotskyists, helping them in the struggle against Lenin and the Party's policy. Soon Bukharin's followers openly joined the Trotskyists. Lenin characterised the "buffer" group as a deviation towards syndicalism leading to denial of the leading role of the Party, and called it "the height of ideological disintegration". p. 466

- <sup>202</sup> *Glavpolitput*—the Chief Political Department of the People's Commissariat for Communications—was formed in February 1919 as a provisional political organ, directly under the C.C. of the R.C.P.(B.) for the purpose of taking measures to prevent the utter ruin of the railways. It was reorganised in January 1920 into the Chief Political Administration of the People's Commissariat for Communications and was abolished by a decision of a Plenary Meeting of the C.C. R.C.P.(B.) on December 7, 1920. p. 465

- <sup>203</sup> This refers to the "platform of 10" ("Draft Decision of the Tenth Congress of the R.C.P.(B.) on the Role and Tasks of the Trade Unions"). Supported by the majority of Party members, it provided the basis for the resolution of the Tenth Party Congress on the role and tasks of the trade unions. p. 473

- 201 V I Zoff's circular of May 3, 1920, was published in the *Bulleten Mariinskogo Oblastnogo Upravleniya Vodnogo Transporta* (Bulletin of the Mariinsky Regional Water Transport Administration) No 3, 1920. It was an example of administration by injunction and red tape, which Tscktran's Trotskyist leadership was cultivating. It placed the trade unions on the footing of outdated army committees and barred them by order from taking part in improving water transport  
p 473
- 202 *Rubkum*—Workers' and Peasants' Inspection  
p 488
- 203 *The Second All-Russia Congress of Miners* was held from January 25 to February 1, 1921. Before the Congress (on January 22-24) the Communist group had four meetings. On January 23, Lenin spoke at the meeting of the group on the role and tasks of the trade unions and the next day he made concluding remarks on the report  
p 492
- 204 On December 24, 1920, Trotsky made a report on the trade unions' tasks in production at a joint meeting of trade union activists and delegates to the Eighth All Russia Congress of Soviets called by the Central Committee of the Joint Union of Rail and Water Transport Workers. It started the open Party discussion on the trade unions  
p 495
- 205 *The Workers' Opposition*—an anti-Party anachronistic factional group headed by A. G. Shlyapnikov, S. P. Medvedev, Alexander Kollontai, I. I. Kutuzov, Y. M. Lutovinov and others. It first came out under this demagogic name in September 1920 at the Ninth All Russia Conference of the R.C.P.(B). The group took final shape in the course of the discussion on the trade unions in 1920-21. Its views were expounded in full in Kollontai's pamphlet *The Workers' Opposition* published on the eve of the Tenth Congress of the R.C.P.(B). The Workers' Opposition proposed that the management of the entire national economy should be transferred to an All Russia Congress of Producers' organised in industrial trade unions which should elect a central body to run the economy. It demanded that all economic bodies should be elected by the corresponding trade unions, with Party and Soviet organs having no power to reject the candidates nominated by the trade unions. These demands actually amounted to denial of the leading role of the Party and the dictatorship of the proletariat as the chief instrument in socialist construction. The Workers' Opposition contraposed the trade unions to the Soviet state and the Communist Party considering them to be the highest form of workers' organisation.
- As for inner Party questions, its platform consisted in slanderous attacks on the Party's leaders whom they accused of being "out of contact with the Party rank and file," "underestimating the proletariat's creative forces," and "causing degeneration of the Party top leadership."
- The Tenth Party Congress decided that propaganda of the Workers' Opposition ideas was incompatible with membership of the Communist Party  
p 495
- 206 *Ekonomicheskaya Zhizn* (Economic Life)—a daily newspaper published from November 1918 to November 1937 first as the organ of the Supreme Economic Council and Economic People's Commissariats and then as the organ of the People's Commissariat for Finances of the USSR and the State Bank  
p 497
- 207 The reference is to *Der Zukunftsstaat Produktion und Konsum im Sozialstaat* (The State of the Future, Production and Consumption in the Socialist State), a book by Karl Billod, a professor of political economy, which was published in Germany in 1898. The second revised edition appeared in 1919, and a Russian translation was published in Moscow, in 1920  
p 500

- <sup>211</sup> The quotations are from the resolution on electrification adopted by the Eighth All-Russia Congress of Soviets on December 29, 1920 (see this volume, pp. 463-64). p. 500
- <sup>212</sup> Here and below the quotations are from the Party Programme adopted by the Eighth Congress of the R.C.P.(B.) in March 1919. p. 502
- <sup>213</sup> Lenin's proposal was reflected in the resolution "On the Substitution of a Tax in Kind for the Surplus Appropriation System", adopted by the Tenth Congress of the R.C.P.(B.). p. 513
- <sup>214</sup> Lenin heard this expression from Clare Sheridan, an English sculptor who visited Soviet Russia in 1920. It apparently belonged to Winston Churchill. p. 514
- <sup>215</sup> This pamphlet by P. I. Popov, manager of the Central Statistical Board, was intended for delegates to the Tenth Party Congress. p. 518
- <sup>216</sup> The reference is to the counter-revolutionary mutiny against the Soviet power in Kronstadt, which began on February 28, 1921. It was organised by the whiteguards, Socialist-Revolutionaries, Mensheviks, anarchists and agents of the imperialist countries. The mutiny revealed a new tactic of the class enemy, who tried to cover up their striving to restore capitalism in Russia with the slogan "Soviets without the Communists" and thus deceive the masses. The counter-revolutionaries wanted to drive out the Communists from the leadership of the Soviets, establish the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie and the capitalist system. The mutiny was suppressed on March 15. p. 518
- <sup>217</sup> *The Fifth All-Ukraine Party Conference* was held in Kharkov in November 1920. Out of 316 delegates, only 23, or 7 per cent, voted for the Workers' Opposition platform. p. 519
- <sup>218</sup> The "Democratic Centralism" group—an opposition group which first appeared at the Eighth Congress of the R.C.P.(B.). At the Ninth Party Congress it put forward co-reporters on economic and organisational questions. During the Party discussion on the trade unions in 1920-21 the group published its own platform. At the Tenth Congress V. N. Maximovsky made a report on behalf of this group. The "Democratic Centralism" group denied the leading role of the Party in the Soviets and trade unions, opposed the principle of one-man management and personal responsibility in running production, and the Leninist principles in organisational matters, and demanded freedom of factions and groups. They exercised no influence on the Party rank and file.  
In 1923 the group disintegrated, its leaders siding with the Trotskyist opposition. p. 519
- <sup>219</sup> *Diskussionny Listok* (Discussion Bulletin)—a non-periodical publication of the Central Committee of the R.C.P.(B.), issued by decision of the Ninth All-Russia Conference of the R.C.P.(B.). Two issues—in January and in February 1921—came out before the Tenth Party Congress, and its publication was subsequently resumed during discussions and before Party congresses. p. 521
- <sup>220</sup> The resolution "On the Syndicalist Deviation in Our Party". p. 521

- <sup>221</sup> By decision of the Tenth Party Congress, Point 7 of the resolution, 'On Party Unity', was not published at the time. The Thirteenth Conference of the R.C.P.(B.) in January 1924 condemned the anti-Party struggle of L. D. Trotsky and his followers and decided to make public Point 7. It appeared in the *Bulletin* of the Thirteenth Party Conference. p. 522
- <sup>222</sup> *Novaya Zhizn* (New Life) and *Uperyod* (Forward)—Menshevik daily newspapers published in 1917-18; were suppressed by the Soviet government for counter-revolutionary activity. p. 531
- <sup>223</sup> Karl Marx, *Critique of the Gotha Programme* (Marx and Engels, *Selected Works*, Vol. 3, Moscow, 1973, p. 19.) p. 531
- <sup>224</sup> Frederick Engels, *The Peasant Question in France and Germany* (Marx and Engels, *Selected Works*, Vol. 3, Moscow, 1973, p. 474). p. 532
- <sup>225</sup> The "man in a muffler"—the main character in a story of the same name by the Russian writer A. P. Chekhov typifying the narrow-minded philistine, who is afraid of all initiative and innovation. p. 534
- <sup>226</sup> Lenin paraphrases the words from Pushkin's poem *A Hero*. p. 543
- <sup>227</sup> *Oblomovism*—from the name of the landowner Oblomov, the main character in a novel by the Russian writer I. A. Gorchakov. Oblomovism is a synonym of sluggishness, stagnation and inertia. p. 543
- <sup>228</sup> The reference is to the Plan for the Electrification of Russia (the GOELRO plan). p. 543
- <sup>229</sup> *Gubernia economic conferences*—local organs of the Council of Labour and Defence set up by a decision of the Eighth All-Russia Congress of Soviets (December 1920), "On Local Organs of Economic Management". They were organised under the gubernia executive committees of Soviets to co-ordinate the activities of local organs of the economic People's Commissariats. p. 546
- <sup>230</sup> The Menshevik emigrant journal, *Sotsialistichesky Vestnik* (Socialist Herald), was founded by L. Martov. It was first published in Berlin (from 1921), then in Paris and later in the U.S.A. p. 551
- <sup>231</sup> *The Third Congress of the Communist International* was held in Moscow from June 22 to July 12, 1921. Its 15 delegates represented 103 organisations in 52 countries, namely: 48 Communist Parties, 8 Socialist Parties, 28 Youth Leagues, 4 syndicalist organisations, 2 opposition Communist Parties (the Communist Workers' Party of Germany and the Workers' Communist Party of Spain) and 13 other organisations.
- The Congress discussed the world economic crisis and the new tasks of the Communist International; the report on the activity of the Executive Committee of the Communist International; the Communist Workers' Party of Germany; the Italian question; the tactics of the Communist International; the attitude of the Red International Council of Trade Unions to the Communist International; the struggle against the Amsterdam International; the tactics of the R.C.P.(B.); the Communist International and the communist youth movement; the women's movement; the United Communist Party of Germany, etc.

V. I. Lenin directed the preparations for and the work of the Congress. The Third Congress had a great influence on the formation and devel-

opment of young Communist Parties. It centred its attention on the Comintern's organisation and tactics in view of the new conditions in which the world communist movement was developing. Lenin had to combat the Centrist deviation and "Leftist" dogmatism, pseudo-revolutionary "Leftist" cant and sectarianism. As a result, revolutionary Marxism prevailed over the "Leftist" danger. p. 559

- <sup>232</sup> On April 13, 1919, in Amritsar, an industrial centre in Punjab, India, British troops fired on a mass meeting of working people who were protesting against the colonial terror. About 1,000 were killed and 2,000 wounded. The massacre led to popular uprisings in Punjab and other provinces, which were ruthlessly suppressed by the British colonialists. p. 560

- <sup>233</sup> The Eighth All-Russia Electroengineering Congress was held in Moscow from October 1 to 9, 1921. p. 564

- <sup>234</sup> *Posledniye Novosti* (The Latest News)—an emigrant daily, organ of the counter-revolutionary party of Constitutional-Democrats, published in Paris from April 1920 to July 1940. Its editor was P. N. Milyukov. p. 565

- <sup>235</sup> *Kommunistichesky Trud* (Communist Labour)—a daily newspaper published by the Moscow R.C.P.(B.) Committee and the Moscow Soviet of Workers' and Peasants' Deputies from March 1918. Now it appears as *Moskovskaya Pravda* (Moscow Truth). p. 566

- <sup>236</sup> Lenin refers to Engels' letter to August Bebel of December 11, 1884 (Marx and Engels, *Selected Correspondence*, Moscow, 1965, p. 381). p. 566

- <sup>237</sup> The work of drafting the theses on tactics for the Third Congress of the Communist International was entrusted to the R.C.P.(B.) delegation. On June 1, 1921, K. B. Radek sent Lenin a draft of the theses containing amendments proposed by A. Thalheimer and Béla Kun and their own draft. Lenin wrote remarks to these drafts, which are given below.

In accordance with Lenin's directions the draft theses on tactics were revised, discussed at preliminary meetings with a number of delegations and tabled at the Third Congress in the name of the Russian delegation. On July 1, Lenin delivered a speech at the congress in defence of the tactics of the Comintern (see this volume, pp. 570-78). On July 12, the theses were unanimously adopted by the Congress. p. 566

- <sup>238</sup> The reference is to the *Open Letter* (Offener Brief) of the Central Committee of the United Communist Party of Germany to the Socialist Party of Germany, the Independent Social-Democratic Party of Germany, the Communist Workers' Party of Germany and all trade unions published in *Die Rote Fahne* (The Red Banner) on January 8, 1921. The U.C.P.G. called on all workers', trade union and socialist organisations to unite their forces in combating the growing reaction and the capitalists' attack on the working people's vital rights. p. 568

- <sup>239</sup> *KAPD* (Kommunistische Arbeiter Partei Deutschlands)—Communist Workers' Party of Germany. See Note 132. p. 568

- <sup>240</sup> *The Italian question* was brought before the Third Congress of the Communist International following the protest of the Italian Socialist Party against the decision of the Comintern's Executive Committee to exclude it from the Comintern and recognise the Communist Party of Italy as the only section of the Comintern in Italy. On June 29, 1921, the Third Comin-

tern Congress adopted the following resolution on the I.S.P.: "The Italian Socialist Party cannot belong to the Communist International so long as the participants in the reformists' conference at Reggio-Emilia and their supporters have not been expelled from the party. In the event of this preliminary conditions being fulfilled, the Third World Congress will authorise the Executive to take the necessary steps to bring about a union between the Italian Socialist Party, after it has cleared its ranks of all reformist and Centrist elements, and the Communist Party of Italy, and to transform both organisations into a single section of the Communist International." The Italian Socialist Party, however, failed to carry out this decision of the Third Congress.

A Left faction of "Third Internationalists" (G. M. Serrati, F. Maffei and others), favouring amalgamation with the Communist Party of Italy, was formed within the Italian Socialist Party in the spring of 1923. In August 1924 the "Third Internationalists" merged with the Communist Party of Italy. p. 568

The reference is to an armed action of the German proletariat in March 1921.

Scared by the growing communist influence on the masses, the bourgeoisie decided to provoke the revolutionary proletarian vanguard into a premature and unprepared armed action and to smash the revolutionary working-class organisations. On March 16, under the pretext of combating criminal elements allegedly instigating strikes, the Social-Democrat Herzog, Chief of the Prussian police, issued an order for police units to be sent to factories in Central Germany. This provocative action caused indignation among the workers and there were clashes with the police. The Left-wing majority of the Central Committee of the United Communist Party of Germany, proceeding from the so-called theory of offensive, incited the workers to start a premature uprising. On March 17, the U.C.P.G. Central Committee adopted a decision that the proletariat must accept battle and called on the German workers to declare a general strike in aid of the workers of Central Germany. However, the majority of the workers were unprepared for action and did not take part in the fighting; only in Central Germany did the fighting grow into an armed struggle. During the March action the young C.P.G. committed a number of mistakes.

Despite the workers' heroic struggle, the March uprising was defeated, the Communist Party and the working class suffered a heavy blow. One of the major reasons of the defeat was the treacherous policy of splitting and scattering forces which was pursued by the Social-Democrats and reformist trade union leaders. No less harm was caused to the uprising and the Communist Party by Paul Levi's opportunist views. p. 569

- 41: Lenin apparently refers to the following text of the initial draft theses on the question of the tactics of the Communist International submitted by K. B. Radek: "Seeing that the Communist International wishes to create only truly revolutionary mass parties, they [what Radek calls Centrist groups in the Communist Parties of a number of countries.—*Ed.*] are making a big noise about the Comintern falling into sectarianism. This is what the Levi group in Germany, the Šmeral group in Czechoslovakia, etc., are doing. The nature of these groups is quite clear. They are Centrist groups, who cloak the policy of passive waiting for a revolution with communist phrases and theories. The Šmeral group put off the organisation of a Communist Party in Czechoslovakia at a time when the majority of the Czechoslovak workers had taken a communist stand" (Central Party Archives of the Institute of Marxism-Leninism of the C.G., C.P.S.U.). p. 570

- <sup>243</sup> The amendments were proposed by the German, Austrian and Italian delegations to the draft theses on tactics, motioned by the Russian delegation at the Third Congress of the Comintern. p. 570
- <sup>244</sup> The *theory of offensive struggle* or "theory of offensive" was proclaimed at the Unity Congress of the Communist Party of Germany and the Left wing of the Independent Social-Democratic Party of Germany in December 1920. It envisaged that the party should conduct offensive tactics, regardless of whether there were any objective conditions for revolutionary activity or whether the working class supported the Communist Party. The theory found its followers among the "Leftists" in Hungary, Czechoslovakia, Italy, Austria, and France, and was one of the causes of the defeat of the March 1921 uprising in Germany.
- At the Third Congress of the Comintern the followers of this theory fought to make it the basis of the Comintern's resolutions on tactics. Lenin proved this "theory" to be wrong and adventurous, and the Congress approved his line of patient preparation and winning over of the majority of the working class to the communist movement. p. 573
- <sup>245</sup> The British miners' strike in protest against the mine-owners' intention to make a substantial cut in wages lasted from April until June 1921. More than a million people, including all the miners participated in it. The coal-miners' federation called on the executive committees of the transport and railway unions to strike in solidarity, but their reformist leaders did not support the miners: they were secretly negotiating with the government and the mineowners for a compromise to break up the strike. The miners had to return to work after a heroic three-month struggle. p. 577
- <sup>246</sup> See Note 23. p. 580
- <sup>247</sup> See Note 24. p. 580
- <sup>248</sup> See Note 4. p. 584
- <sup>249</sup> See Engels' letters to August Bebel of March 18-23, 1875, and December 11, 1884 (Marx and Engels, *Selected Correspondence*, Moscow, 1965, pp. 291, 381). p. 587
- <sup>250</sup> Engels, *Émigré Literature* (see Marx/Engels, *Werke*, Bd. 18, S. 534, Dietz Verlag, Berlin). p. 589
- <sup>251</sup> On January 6, 1922, the Supreme Council of the Entente took a decision to convene in Genoa in early March an international economic and financial conference with Soviet Russia's participation. The imperialists of the Entente hoped to compel Russia to make a number of political and economic concessions and, at the same time, to establish economic relations with her. Guided by the principle of peaceful co-existence and considering it necessary to establish diplomatic and economic relations with capitalist countries, the Soviet Government agreed to take part in the conference.
- The Genoa Conference sat from April 10 to May 19, 1922. It was attended by representatives from 29 countries, including Great Britain, France, Italy, Belgium, Japan, Germany and Soviet Russia. A U.S. representative was present as an "observer".
- The Soviet delegation advanced an extensive programme aimed at consolidating peace and economic co-operation between nations, and at establishing business-like trade relations between Soviet Russia and capitalist countries. An important item in this programme was the question of a general reduction of armaments.
- At the Conference the imperialist powers tried to make use of Soviet

Russia's economic difficulties in order to impose a one-sided agreement on her. They demanded the payment of all tsarist debts including pre-war debts, the return of nationalised enterprises to foreign owners, etc.

Following the directives of the Party's Central Committee and instructions from Lenin, the Soviet delegation categorically rejected the outrageous demands of the imperialists, rebuffing their encroachments on the sovereignty of the Soviet state. Because of the hostile attitude of France and Britain towards Soviet Russia the Conference broke down. On May 19, at its last plenary session, the Conference decided to set up two commissions of experts (from Soviet Russia and the Western powers), to meet in the Hague in June 1922 and further discuss questions not settled at the Genoa Conference.

p. 594

- <sup>252</sup> Lenin refers to the policy of making certain concessions pursued in the early 1920s by the British Government under Lloyd George with a view to suppressing the revolutionary national liberation movement in Ireland. On December 6, 1920, the long stubborn struggle of the Irish people for national independence ended with the conclusion of the Anglo-Irish treaty, which provided for the establishment of a dominion, the Irish Free State, within the British Empire. The six north-eastern counties (Ulster), the most industrially developed part of Ireland, were severed from her and remained within the United Kingdom.

p. 594

- <sup>253</sup> This document is written below the text of G. V. Chicherin's letter of February 15, 1922. Having in mind the directives of the R.C.P.(B.) C.C. and Lenin's instructions concerning the nature of the programme with which the Soviet delegation was to come out at the Genoa Conference, Chicherin wrote: "I don't know how we shall cope with the 'broadest programme'. All my life I have cursed petty-bourgeois illusions, and here is the Politbureau making me invent petty-bourgeois illusions in my old age. None of us knows how to compose such things, we don't even know on which sources we are to rely. Perhaps you will let us have more detailed directions?" (Central Party Archives of the Institute of Marxism-Leninism of the C.C., C.P.S.U.).

p. 596

- <sup>254</sup> The reference is to the terms contained in the resolution of the Cannes Conference of the Entente Supreme Council held on January 6-13, 1922. As stated in the resolution, they were to ensure the success of the forthcoming international economic and financial conference in Genoa. They envisaged guarantees of inviolability and of profits for foreign capital when it rendered help to any country, recognition of all debts and obligations, which had been or would be contracted or guaranteed by the government of a given country, acknowledgment of obligations to return, restore or compensate all losses and damages caused to foreign interests by the confiscation or sequestration of property, etc. In conclusion, the Allied Powers declared that they could recognise the Soviet Government only after the latter accepted all these conditions.

p. 596

- <sup>255</sup> *Pod Znamenem Marksizma* (Under the Banner of Marxism) - a philosophical and socio-economic monthly published in Moscow from January 1922 to June 1944 (in 1933-35 it came out every two months) for the purpose of popularising militant materialism and atheism.

p. 599

- <sup>256</sup> *Popular Socialists* were members of the petty-bourgeois Popular Socialist Labour Party, which broke away from the Right wing of the Socialist-Revolutionary Party. In 1906 they were in favour of forming a bloc with the Cadets.

After the bourgeois-democratic revolution in February 1917 this party merged with another S.R. group, the Trudoviks; it actively supported the



bourgeois Provisional Government, accepting portfolios in it. After the October Socialist Revolution the Popular Socialists took part in counter-revolutionary conspiracies and in armed actions against the Soviet government. p. 599

- <sup>257</sup> Lenin refers to the following words of Josef Dietzgen: "From the depth of our hearts we despise the high-sounding phrases about 'education and science', speeches about 'ideal good' uttered by the diploma'd lackeys, who today dupe the people with sham idealism just as formerly heathen clericals fooled them with information about Nature first received at the time" (*Selected Philosophical Works*, 1941, p. 261). p. 600
- <sup>258</sup> See Frederick Engels, *Émigré Literature* (Marx/Engels, *Werke*, Bd. 18, S. 532, Dietz Verlag, Berlin). p. 601
- <sup>259</sup> Lenin borrowed this expression from *A Story of a Town* by the Russian writer M. Y. Saltykov-Shchedrin. p. 605
- <sup>260</sup> *Ekonomist*—a journal published by the Department of Industry and Economy of the Russian Technical Society consisting of bourgeois engineers and technicians and former factory owners who were hostile to the Soviet government. It was published in Petrograd from December 1921 to June 1922, the first issue being dated 1922. p. 605
- <sup>261</sup> See Note 251. p. 607
- <sup>262</sup> See Note 55. p. 619
- <sup>263</sup> The reference is apparently to some delegates of the French Communist Party to the First Enlarged Plenary Meeting of the Executive Committee of the Communist International who failed to understand the essence and significance of the New Economic Policy of the R.C.P.(B.) and alleged that NEP was leading to the restoration of capitalism in Russia and weakening the international revolutionary movement.  
*The First Enlarged Plenary Meeting of the Executive Committee of the Communist International* took place in Moscow from February 21 to March 4, 1922. The main item on the agenda was the united front tactics. The theses "The New Economic Policy of Soviet Russia" confirmed the correctness and international significance of NEP. p. 621
- <sup>264</sup> Lenin refers to Matvás Rakosi's article "The New Economic Policy in Soviet Russia", which analysed Otto Bauer's pamphlet "*Der neue Kurs*" in *Sowjetrussland* published in Vienna in 1921. Rakosi's article appeared in March 1922 in the magazine *Communist International*. p. 622
- <sup>265</sup> Lenin has in mind the struggle between the Bolsheviks and Mensheviks in emigration. p. 623
- <sup>266</sup> The Commission for Mixed Companies under the Council of Labour and Defence was set up in February 1922, its chairman being G. Y. Sokolnikov. p. 623
- <sup>267</sup> *The Northern Timber Trust* (Severoles) was a special administrative body of the timber industry of the North White Sea area. It was established in 1921. p. 623
- <sup>268</sup> *Persuader-in-Chief*—the nickname given by the soldiers to A. F. Kerensky, War and Navy Minister of the Provisional Government, for trying to persuade the soldiers to start an offensive when he toured the front in the summer of 1917. p. 624

<sup>269</sup> *Smena Uekkh* people—representatives of a socio-political trend which arose in 1921 among the Russian White intellectuals in emigration and was supported by some of the old, bourgeois intellectuals who had remained in Soviet Russia. They derived their name from the title of a collection of articles *Smena Uekkh* (Change of Landmarks), published in Prague in 1921. The *Smena Uekkh* people's ideologists were White emigrants of Constitutional-Democratic orientation. They published a journal, *Smena Uekkh*, in Paris from October 1921 to March 1922. The *Smena Uekkh* people regarded the transition to the New Economic Policy (NEP) as an evolution of Soviet rule towards the restoration of capitalism and offered it their co-operation, hoping that the Soviet state would degenerate into a bourgeois republic. However, some of them were prepared to co-operate loyally with the Soviet government.

Subsequently, most of them openly sided with the counter-revolutionaries  
p. 625

<sup>270</sup> The reference is to the census of responsible officials carried out in July 1921 with a view to ascertaining the number and efficiency of leading Party functionaries in gubernia and uyezd centres, their territorial distribution and the suitability of their employment.  
p. 631

<sup>271</sup> *The Commission for Collecting and Studying Materials on the History of the October Revolution and the History of the Russian Communist Party* was set up at the People's Commissariat of Education by a decree of the Council of People's Commissars on September 21, 1920  
p. 636

<sup>272</sup> The reference is to the Central Coal Industry Board (Ĉ.C.I.B.). G. L. Pyatakov, head of the Board, adopted the policy of administration by mere injunctions and resorted to military red-tape methods in running industry. All this led to disagreements between the leading economic officials, as well as between the Ĉ.C.I.B. and local functionaries. At the Sixth Conference of the Communist Party (Bolsheviks) of the Ukraine, held from December 9 to 13, 1921, the delegates of the Donets Basin and other organisations condemned Pyatakov's methods of work.  
p. 636

<sup>273</sup> This refers to a speech by Jean Renault in connection with the debate on the law defining the term of military service  
p. 635

<sup>274</sup> *The Central Verification Commission* was set up on June 25, 1921 by the C.C., R.C.P.(B) to direct the work of local verification commissions during the period of the Party purge.  
p. 642

<sup>275</sup> This Council was set up by a decree of the All-Russia Central Executive Committee on July 8, 1919 and authorised to provide supplies for the Red Army and Navy. It was dissolved by a Central Executive Committee decree of August 16, 1921, and its personnel and property were handed over to the Supreme Economic Council bodies.  
p. 643

<sup>276</sup> Lenin probably has in mind G. I. Myasnikov, expelled from the R.C.P.(B) by its Central Committee on February 20, 1922, F. A. Mitin and N. V. Kuznetsov, expelled from the Party by the Eleventh Congress of the R.C.P.(B).  
p. 645

<sup>277</sup> The reference is to the Second Congress of the R.S.D.L.P. which met from July 17 to August 10 (July 30-August 23), 1903. The first thirteen sittings were held in Brussels and then, owing to police persecution, the Congress was transferred to London. The Congress was attended by 43 delegates representing 26 organisations.  
p. 648

<sup>278</sup> On August 10, 1922, the Political Bureau of the C.C., R.C.P.(B.) set up a committee to study the question of further developing mutual relations between the R.S.F.S.R., the Ukrainian S.S.R., Byelorussian S.S.R., Azerbaijan S.S.R., Georgian S.S.R., and Armenian S.S.R. in preparation for the Plenary Meeting of the Central Committee. The original draft resolution on "Mutual Relations of the R.S.F.S.R. and Independent Republics" was drawn up by Stalin. It was based on the idea of "autonomisation", that is, the union of the national Soviet Republics by their entry into the R.S.F.S.R. as autonomous units. On September 23-24 the committee adopted the resolution proposed by Stalin.

On September 25 the committee's materials were sent to Lenin in Gorki. After studying them, Lenin had a talk with Stalin on September 26, after which he wrote the letter to the members of the Political Bureau which is published here. In this letter Lenin emphatically opposed the "autonomisation" of independent national Soviet Republics and proposed a new way of uniting them, which was quite different in principle: he suggested to form the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

Acting on Lenin's directives, the committee drew up a new draft resolution on the union of the Soviet Republics, which was submitted for discussion at the Plenary Meeting of the C.C., R.C.P.(B.) on October 6, 1922. Accepting this draft as a directive, the Plenary Meeting set up a committee of representatives of the R.S.F.S.R. and of the Soviet Republics of the Ukraine, Byelorussia, Azerbaijan, Georgia and Armenia and charged it with drafting a Bill on this basis and securing its adoption by the congresses of Soviets.

The First Congress of the Soviets of the U.S.S.R., held on December 30, 1922, unanimously adopted a Declaration and Union Treaty on the formation of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics based on Lenin's idea of equality and fraternal co-operation of peoples, and on the idea of proletarian internationalism (see also Lenin's letter "The Question of Nationalities or 'Autonomisation'": in this volume, pp. 689-92). p. 651

<sup>279</sup> The December Plenary Meeting of the Central Committee unanimously passed a decision revoking the decision of the preceding Plenary Meeting held in October and confirmed that it was "unquestionably necessary to preserve and organisationally strengthen the foreign trade monopoly". Nevertheless Lenin attached such great importance to the question of the foreign trade monopoly that he proposed that the Communist Group should be informed on it at the forthcoming Tenth All-Russia Congress of Soviets and that it should be brought up for discussion at the Twelfth Party Congress. Acting on Lenin's instructions, the Twelfth Party Congress, which was held from April 17 to 25, 1923, examined the question. Its resolution, passed on the report of the C.C., R.C.P.(B.), stated: "The Congress categorically affirms that the monopoly of foreign trade is immutable and that no one is permitted to bypass it or to waver in implementing it. The new Central Committee is instructed to take systematic measures to strengthen and promote the monopoly of foreign trade." p. 656

<sup>280</sup> The slogan of *Free Trade*, i.e., non-interference of the state in trade, was widely used by the English bourgeoisie in the 19th century. Striving to secure the support of the mass of workers in the struggle against the big landowners, the free-traders asserted that free trade would improve the condition of the working people. Karl Marx showed that these assertions were unfounded and stemmed from the fact that the free-trader *vulgaris* drew his views and ideas and the "standard by which he judges a society based on capital and wages" only from the "sphere of simple circulation or of exchange of commodities" (Karl Marx, *Capital*, Vol. I, Moscow, 1972, p. 172). p. 657

<sup>281</sup> *The Fourth Congress of the Communist International* met from November 5 to December 5, 1922. It opened in Petrograd and then, from November 9 onwards, the sittings were held in Moscow. The Congress was attended by delegates from 58 Communist Parties. Also present were representatives of the Italian Socialist Party, the Iceland Workers' Party, the Mongolian People's Revolutionary Party, the Young Communist International, the Profintern, the International Women's Secretariat, the U.S. Negro Organisation and the International Workers' Aid. The Congress discussed the report of the Executive Committee of the Communist International and the following items: five years of the Russian revolution and the prospects of the world revolution, the offensive of capital, the Comintern's programme, the tasks of Communists in the trade unions, the Eastern and the agrarian question and others.

As head of the bureau of the R.C.P.(B.) delegation, Lenin directed the work of the Russian delegation in general and took an active part in drawing up the major resolutions of the Congress. Lenin read his report 'Five Years of the Russian Revolution and the Prospects of the World Revolution', which became the main event of the Congress, in German at the morning sitting on November 13.

The Congress endorsed the theses on a united workers' front, approved the theses on the tactics of the Communist International, on the tasks of Communists in the trade union movement, and on the Eastern question, and adopted resolutions on the socialist revolution in Russia, on the Young Communist International and other questions. p. 666

<sup>282</sup> The reference is to the talks on the leasing of a mining concession to the British industrialist and financier John Leslie Urquhart, who before the October Revolution was President of the Russo-Asiatic Joint Society and owner of big mining enterprises in Russia. On September 9, 1922, L. B. Krasin, People's Commissar of Foreign Trade, signed a draft agreement with Urquhart, under which Urquhart was to receive as a concession former enterprises of the Russo-Asiatic Joint Society in the Urals and Siberia for a term of 99 years, the Soviet Government having the right to buy out all the concessionary enterprises ahead of time after the expiry of 40 years. Under the terms of the agreement, the Soviet side was to render material help to the concessionaire for the restoration of his circulating capital and the enterprises proper to the extent of the damage suffered by the concessionaire as a result of the decrees of the Soviet Government.

Lenin read the draft agreement and saw that it was unfavourable for the Soviet state, therefore he opposed its approval. The Plenary Meeting of the R.C.P.(B.) Central Committee on October 5 and the Council of People's Commissars on October 6, 1922, rejected the draft agreement with Urquhart. Thus the concession was not granted. p. 666

<sup>283</sup> This expression belongs to Pigasov, one of the characters in Ivan Turgenev's novel *Rudin*. p. 669

<sup>284</sup> Lenin refers to the theses "Organisational Structure of the Communist Parties, Methods and Content of Work", adopted by the Third Congress of the Communist International. p. 370

<sup>285</sup> The reference is to the decision adopted by the People's Assembly of the Far Eastern Republic on November 14, 1922, to join the R.S.F.S.R. It was published in the newspapers on November 15. p. 673

<sup>286</sup> At the end of October and the beginning of November 1922, *Pravda*

published several discussion articles on the conclusion of an agreement with Leslie Urquhart. The discussion was organised on Lenin's proposal.  
p. 676

<sup>287</sup> This refers to the conference which was being prepared by Britain, France and Italy on the Middle East problems in connection with the defeat of the Anglo-Greek intervention in Turkey (Lausanne Conference).  
p. 676

<sup>288</sup> On December 16, 1922, Lenin had a severe attack of his illness, and in the following days there was a further deterioration in his condition. Lenin could not write, his right hand being paralysed, and he had to dictate his notes to stenographers. The letters and articles contained in this volume were dictated by him from the end of December 1922 to March 1923.

"Letter to the Congress" contains notes dictated by him on December 23, 24, 25 and 26, 1922; as well as on December 29, 1922 ("Addition to the Section on Increasing the Number of C.C. Members") and January 4, 1924 (Addition to the Letter of December 24, 1922).

As Lenin wished, his notes of December 24-25, 1922, and January 4, 1923, containing characteristics of C.C. members, were handed over to the Central Committee of the Party by his wife, Nadezhda Krupskaya, after Lenin's death. In May 1924, his "Letter to the Congress" was read out to the delegations of the Thirteenth Party Congress.

In December 1927, the Fifteenth Congress of the R.C.P.(B.) decided to append Lenin's Letter (notes of December 24 and 25, 1922, and January 4, 1923) to the Congress verbatim report and to publish it as well as Lenin's other letters on inner-Party questions in *Lenin Miscellanies*. Under this decision the notes of December 24-25, 1922, and January 4, 1923, were published in the bulletin, No. 30, of the Fifteenth Party Congress. The second part of this decision was not materialised: Lenin's letters on inner-Party questions were nowhere published. In 1956, by decision of the C.P.S.U. Central Committee, these letters were brought to the notice of the Twentieth Party Congress, sent out to Party organisations and widely publicised.  
p. 679

<sup>289</sup> *Russkaya Mysl* (*Russian Thought*)—a journal published in Prague by P. B. Struve in 1922.  
p. 680

<sup>290</sup> This refers to the capitulatory position of Zinoviev and Kamenev at the sittings of the Party Central Committee on October 10 (23) and 16 (29), 1917, when they spoke and voted against Lenin's resolution on immediate preparations for an armed uprising. Though they were given a firm rebuff at both sittings, they issued a statement in the Menshevik *Novaya Zarya* (October 18) about the Bolshevik preparations for the uprising in the immediate future, which, they said, was a gamble. Thus they gave away to the bourgeois Provisional Government a great Party secret. That same day Lenin, in his "Letter to Bolshevik Party Members", condemned their behaviour and said it was an unprecedented act of strike-breaking (*Collected Works*, Vol. 26, pp. 216-19).  
p. 680

<sup>291</sup> This letter was handed over to the Party Central Committee by Krupskaya early in June 1923. On June 14, the Political Bureau of the Party Central Committee adopted a decision "to send out to the members and candidate members of the Central Committee Comrade Lenin's notes on the State Planning Commission". Lenin's instructions found expression in the resolution of the Thirteenth Conference of the R.C.P.(B.) entitled "The Immediate Tasks of the Economic Policy" (section VIII—"On the Need for Strengthening the Planning Principle").  
p. 683

<sup>292</sup> Lenin was prompted to write this letter by the conflict in the Georgian Communist Party between the Transcaucasian Territory Committee of the R.C.P.(B), headed by G. K. Orjonikidze, and the Mdivani group, which actually hampered the economic and political union of the Transcaucasian Republics, in fact stood for the preservation of Georgia's isolation and thereby played into the hands of the bourgeois nationalists, the Georgian Mensheviks. On the other hand, Orjonikidze too committed a number of serious errors: he failed to show due flexibility and caution in conducting the Party's nationality policy in Georgia, displayed a purely administrative approach and haste in carrying out certain measures and frequently ignored the opinion and rights of the Central Committee of the Georgian Communist Party. Nor was he patient enough in relation to the Mdivani group.

In this letter, 'The Question of Nationalities' or 'Autonomisation'. Lenin dealt with the major questions of the Party's nationality policy. He considered his letter to be guiding, attached great importance to it and intended to publish it later as an article. However, due to the sudden turn for the worse in his health after March 6, 1923, V. I. Lenin was unable to give final instructions regarding the letter. On April 16, Lydia Litkei sent Lenin's letter to the Political Bureau of the R.C.P.(B) Central Committee and it was read out to the delegations at the Twelfth Party Congress. Following Lenin's instructions, the Congress introduced a number of important amendments and additions to it, drafted a resolution on the nationality question.

p. 657

<sup>13</sup> *Autonomisation*—the idea of uniting the Soviet Republics through their entry into the R.S.F.S.R. on the principle of autonomy. The project was proposed by Joseph Stalin. Lenin sharply criticised the project and suggested a solution of the question differing in principle, namely voluntary union of all the Soviet Republics in a new state entity—the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics—based on complete equality. On December 30, 1922, the First Congress of Soviets of the U.S.S.R. adopted a decision on the formation of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

p. 657

<sup>14</sup> This refers to the plenary meetings of the R.C.P.(B) Central Committee held in October and December 1922, both discussing the question of the formation of the U.S.S.R.

p. 655

<sup>15</sup> No heading was given in the typewritten text. In *Pravda* the article was published under the title 'Pages from a Diary'.

Lenin's article exerted a direct influence on education in the U.S.S.R. On January 10, 1923, the People's Commissariat of Education wired to the educational departments suggesting them to distribute widely the article 'Pages from a Diary' and work out concrete measures to implement Lenin's instructions contained in it.

p. 693

<sup>28</sup> Lenin refers here to the Central Board of Vocational School and Higher Educational Establishments of the People's Commissariat of Education.

p. 693

<sup>29</sup> The articles "On Co-operation" and "Our Revolution" (Apropos of N. Sukhanov's Notes) were handed over by Krupskaya to the Party Central Committee in May 1923. On May 24, the Political Bureau found it necessary to publish these articles as soon as possible with dates as given in the articles. On June 26, the Political Bureau discussed the question of co-operation in the new light in which it was presented in Lenin's articles.

Lenin's ideas on organising the peasants into co-operatives provided the basis for the resolutions adopted by the Thirteenth Party Congress, "On Co-operation" and "Work in the Countryside".

p. 695

- <sup>298</sup> This article was written by Lenin apropos of the third and fourth books of *Notes about Revolution* by the Menshevik N. Sukhanov. It was handed over to the *Pravda* editorial board by Krupskaya without any heading; the heading was provided by the editors. p. 705
- <sup>299</sup> The reference is probably to the characteristic of the Paris Commune as a highly flexible political form given in Marx's *The Civil War in France* and the high appraisal of the "flexibility of the Parisians" given by Marx in a letter to Ludwig Kugelmann on April 12, 1871 (see Marx and Engels, *Selected Works*, Vol. 2, Moscow, 1973, pp. 223 and 420-21). p. 705
- <sup>300</sup> Lenin has in mind the following passage from Marx's letter to Engels on April 16, 1856: "The whole thing in Germany will depend on the possibility of backing the proletarian revolution by some second edition of the Peasant War. Then the affair will be splendid" (Marx and Engels, *Selected Correspondence*, Moscow, 1965, p. 92). p. 705
- <sup>301</sup> This article is directly connected with Lenin's "Letter to the Congress" and develops the ideas contained in it. Lenin's article "Better Fewer, But Better" continues and develops the article "How We Should Reorganise the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection".  
Acting on Lenin's recommendations, the Party Central Committee drew up theses for the Twelfth Party Congress on reorganising and improving the work of the Party's central bodies, and a draft resolution on reorganising the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection and the Central Control Commission.  
The Twelfth Congress adopted the resolution on the question of organisation and the resolution "On the Tasks of the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection and the Central Control Commission". In accordance with Lenin's proposals the Congress enlarged the membership of the C.C. and the C.C.C. and set up a joint body—the C.C.C.-W.P.I. p. 709
- <sup>302</sup> Lenin has in mind O. A. Yermansky's book *Scientific Organisation of Labour and Production and Taylor's System* and P. M. Kerzhentsev's book *Principles of Organisation*, both published in 1922 by the State Publishing House. p. 719
- <sup>303</sup> The power project on the Volkhov River, 120 kilometres from Petrograd (now Leningrad), was the first large hydropower station in Soviet Russia. Construction was started in 1918, but the work really got under way only in 1921, after the Civil War. p. 725

## NAME INDEX

### A

*Idler, Friedrich* (1879-1960)—leader of the Austrian Social Democrats after the 1918 revolution in Austria, joined the counter revolutionaries, an organizer of the Centrist Two-and-a-Half International (1921-23) and later a leader of the so-called Socialist Labour International—231, 292-298, 304, 351

*Igorovskiy, Vladimir Viktorovich* (1878-1945)—Party member from 1904, in 1918 worked in the People's Commissariat of Education and later in Kazan University, from 1920 deputy manager of the Central Archives Administration—566

*I. J.*—164, 167

*Albert M.—see Iberlein, Hugo*

*Isiyom (Sergeyev, Fyodor Indreyevich)* (1883-1921)—Party member from 1901, Secretary of the Moscow Committee of the RCP(B) (1920-21), from 1921 Chairman of the Central Committee of the All-Russian Miners' Union, at the Tenth Party Congress, was elected member of the C.C. RCP(B)—473

*Isquith, Herbert Henry* (1852-1928)—British politician and statesman. Liberal Party leader repeatedly held ministerial posts and from 1908 to 1916 headed the government. Spokesman of the British imperialist bourgeoisie and its annexationist interests, conducted a

policy of suppressing the working class and the liberation movement—340, 344

*Austerlitz, Friedrich* (1862-1931)—a leader of the Austrian Social-Democratic Party, editor in chief of its central organ *Arbeiter Zeitung*, MP from Vienna during the First World War, adopted a social chauvinist stand—298

*Aleksentyev, Nikolai Dmitriyevich* (1875-1943)—a leader of the Socialist Revolutionary Party and member of its Central Committee. After the February 1917 bourgeois democratic revolution, Chairman of the Executive Committee of the All-Russian Council of Peasants Deputies. Minister of the Interior in the Kerensky government and later Chairman of the counter revolutionary Provisional Council of the Russian Republic (Pro-Parliament). After the October Socialist Revolution helped organize counter revolutionary revolts, subsequently fled abroad—74, 197

*Axelrod, Pavel Borisovich* (1860-1928)—a Menshevik leader. During the First World War used pacifist phrases to mask his virtually social chauvinist standpoint. After the February 1917 bourgeois democratic revolution was member of the Executive Committee of the Petrograd Soviet and supported the bourgeois Provisional Government. Was hostile to the October Socialist Revolution, fled



abroad and publicly advocated armed intervention against Soviet Russia.—41, 47, 89, 333

## B

- Babushkin, Ivan Vasilyevich* (1873-1906)—Bolshevik worker and professional revolutionary, active member of the St. Petersburg League of Struggle for the Emancipation of the Working Class; took part in organising the Leninist newspaper *Iskra*; active participant in the 1905-07 Revolution; captured by a tsarist punitive detachment when smuggling rifles, and shot without trial.—319
- Ballod, Karl* (1864-1931)—bourgeois economist, author of several works on economics, including the book *Der Zukunftsstaat*.—500
- Bauer, Otto (Weber, Heinrich)* (1882-1938)—a leader of the Austrian Social-Democrats and of the Second International, ideologist of so-called Austro-Marxism, which used Marxist terminology to cover its rejection of revolutionary Marxism and of the class struggle of the proletariat.—292, 298, 304, 332, 337, 357, 400, 401, 622, 623, 637
- Rebel, August* (1840-1913)—a prominent figure in the German Social-Democratic movement and in the Second International; at the turn of the century, actively opposed reformism and revisionism in the German Social-Democratic movement. Talented organiser and political journalist; exerted a great influence on the development of the German and international working-class movement.—29, 48, 53, 57, 65, 302, 566, 587, 649
- Bernstein, Eduard* (1850-1932)—leader of the extreme opportunist wing of the German Social-Democratic Party and of the Second International; theoretician of reformism and revisionism. Declared that the struggle for reforms to improve the workers' condition under capitalism was the main aim of the working-class movement and advanced an opportunist slogan: "The movement is everything, the ultimate aim is nothing." During the First World War, adopted a Centrist stand covering his social-chauvinism with phrases about internationalism; opposed the October Socialist Revolution and the Soviet state.—19, 27, 59, 302
- Bismarck, Otto Eduard Leopold* (1815-1898)—statesman and diplomat of Prussia and Germany; Chancellor of the German Empire (1871-90); carried out the unification of the scattered German states into a single German Empire under the hegemony of Prussia.—53
- Blanc, Louis* (1811-1882)—French petty-bourgeois socialist and historian. During the 1848 revolution, as member of the Provisional Government and head of the commission for studying the labour question, conducted a policy of conciliation with the bourgeoisie, thereby helping it to divert the workers from the revolutionary struggle.—26
- Bogayevsky, Mitrofan Petrovich* (1881-1918)—a leader of the Don counter-revolutionary Cossacks; from June 1917 to January 1918, was vice-ataman of the Don Army (General Kaledin being its ataman). In early January 1918, became member of the counter-revolutionary Don Government.—535
- Bordiga, Amadeo* (b. 1889)—Italian politician; in 1910 joined the Italian Socialist Party and headed a trend close to anarchism; from 1919, advanced a programme boycotting bourgeois parliaments. In 1921, took part in founding the Italian Communist Party and conducted a Left-sectarian policy.—328, 365
- Brandler, Heinrich* (b. 1881)—member of the German Social-Democratic Party from 1898; during the First World War, joined the Spartacus League. When the Communist Party of Germany was founded (1919), became a member and from 1919 to 1923, was a member of its Central Committee; in 1921, adopted a "Leftist" stand;

in 1922 and 1923 committed a number of Right wing opportunist errors and was expelled from the Central Committee, in 1929 was expelled from the Party—569

*Branting Carl Hjalmar* (1860 1925)—leader of the Swedish Social Democratic Party and one of the leaders of the Second International in opportunist. During the First World War social chauvinist supported armed intervention against Soviet Russia—106

*Braun M I*—see *Bronsky M G*

*Brentano Iugo* (1844 1931)—German bourgeois economist advocate of Katheder Socialism preached rejection of the class struggle and sought to prove that it was possible to solve social contradictions within the framework of capitalist society and to reconcile the interests of the workers and the capitalists by means of reformist trade unions and factory legislation—17

*Bronsky M G* (*Braun M I*) (1852 1941)—Polish Social Democrat subsequently member of the Bolshevik Party after the October Socialist Revolution Deputy Peoples Commissar of Trade and Industry from 1920 Soviet plenipotentiary and trade representative in Austria—393 394

*Bukharin Nikolai Ivanovich* 1855 1955) member of the RSDLP from 1906 political journalist and economist opposed Lenin on the questions of the state the dictatorship of the proletariat the right of nations to self determination etc. In 1918 during the conclusion of the Treaty of Brest Litovsk headed the anti Party opportunist group of Left Communists and in 1929 became leader of the Right wing opportunist deviation. In 1937 expelled from the RCP(B) for anti Party activities—112 113 114 116 117 118 130 136 304 459 465 96 2 154 167 619 636 657 658 681

*Bullitt William Christian* (b 1891)—American reactionary journalist and diplomat an instigator of anti Soviet policy. In 1919 Wil-

son and Lloyd George sent him to Soviet Russia on a special mission—249

## C

*Cacaignac Louis Eugene* (1802 1857)—French general and reactionary politician in June 1848 headed the military dictatorship and put down the June uprising of the Paris workers with extreme ferocity—528

*Chernomkov B N* (b 1858)—member of the Constituent Assembly participant in the Ufa State Conference in 1918 Minister of Agriculture in the Ufa counter revolutionary directorate in 1919 member of 'The People's Socialist Revolutionary Group'—182, 183

*Chernov Viktor Mikhailovich* (1876 1932)—a leader and theoretician of the Socialist Revolutionary Party. During the First World War used Left phrasology to cover his virtually social chauvinist standpoint. After the October Socialist Revolution helped organise anti Soviet revolts in 1920 emigrated—192 197 235 236 333 550 551 552 556 581

*Chernyshevsky Nikolai Gavrilovich* (1828 1889)—Russian revolutionary democrat scientist writer and literary critic an outstanding precursor of Russian Social Democracy—332 399

*Chicherin George Vasilyevich* (1872 1936)—Soviet state man and diplomat People's Commissar for Foreign Affairs (1918 30) head of the Soviet delegation at the international conferences in Genoa and Lusanne—596

*Chu Hsi Wntai* (1874 1905)—British politician Conservative as War Minister was one of the instigators of armed intervention against Soviet Russia in 1918 21—241 268 269 243 344 346 352

*Clemenceau George Benjamin* (1841 1929)—French politician and statesman Prime Minister (1906 09 and 191 20) during the First World War an extreme chauvin-

- ist; an organiser and instigator of the blockade and armed intervention against the Soviet Republic.—30, 63, 267, 396, 397
- Clynes, John Robert* (1869-1949)—British politician, a leader of the Labour Party; social-chauvinist during the First World War. In MacDonald's Labour governments, was Lord Privy Seal and Home Secretary; took part in carrying out an anti-workers' policy.—339, 340
- Crispien, Arthur* (1875-1946)—a leader of the German Social-Democrats, head of the Right wing of the Independent Social-Democratic Party of Germany (1917-22). In 1920, attended the Second Congress of the Communist International, but on his return to Germany opposed affiliation to the Comintern. In 1922, rejoined the German Social Democratic Party.—302, 334, 363, 364
- D**
- Dan (Gurvich), Fyodor Ivanovich* (1871-1947)—a Menshevik leader; in the years of reaction and a new revolutionary upsurge headed a group of liquidators abroad; during the First World War, took a social-chauvinist stand. After the October Socialist Revolution, opposed the Soviet government.—56, 550
- De Leon, Daniel* (1852-1914)—active participant in the U.S. labour movement, leader and ideologist of the American Socialist Labour Party from the 1890s; political journalist; a founder of the Industrial Workers of the World.—317
- Denikin, Anton Ivanovich* (1872-1947)—tsarist general; during the foreign military intervention and Civil War (1918-20), commander-in-chief of the whiteguard armed forces in the south of Russia; after defeat by the Red Army, fled abroad.—184-99, 217-21, 226, 240, 242, 245, 258-63, 267, 275, 280, 286, 306, 312, 313, 325, 420, 445, 554, 593, 675
- Diezgen, Joseph* (1828-1888)—German philosopher who independently arrived at dialectical materialism; Social-Democrat.—325, 600
- Dicows, Arthur* (1865-1935)—German reactionary historian of early Christianity; denied the existence of Christ, but criticised Church dogma and religious prejudices from an idealist standpoint.—602
- Dicyfus, Alfred* (1859-1935)—Jewish officer on the French General Staff, sentenced in 1891 to penal servitude for life on a false charge of treason. Was pardoned in 1899 and reinstated in 1906 as a result of the campaign conducted by the workers and progressive intellectuals in his defence.—31, 102, 354
- Dutov, Alexander Ilyich* (1864-1921)—tsarist colonel; in 1918-19, a leader of the Cossack counter-revolution in the Urals; defeated by the Red Army in 1920.—53, 89
- Dugoni, Enrico* (1874-1945)—Italian socialist; on the eve of the First World War, joined the reformist group of Turati-Tièsses. In 1920 visited Soviet Russia as a member of the delegation of Italian socialists. On his return to Italy published a defamatory book about the revolution in Russia.—365
- Dyachenko, Andrei Pavlovich* (1875-1952)—Bolshevik from 1917, in 1919, worked as a doctor's assistant on the Moscow-Kazan Railway. After the Civil War a public health worker in the Altai Region.—168, 70
- Dzerzhinsky, Felix Edmundovich* (1877-1926)—a leader of the Communist Party and Soviet statesman; Party member from 1895. After the February 1917 bourgeois-democratic revolution, was engaged in Party work in Moscow. After the victory of the October Socialist Revolution—Chairman of the All-Russia Extraordinary Commission for Combating Counter-Revolution and Sabotage (the Vecheka).—688, 689, 691

## E

*Eberlein, Hugo (Albert, M.)* (1887-1944)—German Communist, a leader of the Spartacus League and member of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Germany; delegate to the First, Fourth and Seventh congresses of the Comintern.—110-11

*Einstein, Albert* (1879-1955)—physicist, formulated the theory of relativity and made discoveries in the sphere of the quantum theory of light; awarded Nobel prize for his works on molecular physics and quantum theory.—600, 604

*Eyre, Lincoln*—correspondent of the American bourgeois newspaper *The World*.—267-71

*Engels, Frederick* (1820-1895)—21, 24-27, 29, 35, 36, 38, 40, 43, 48, 58-59, 62, 65, 72, 92-96, 99, 112, 144-45, 200, 202, 212, 238, 302, 309, 317, 328, 329, 332, 566, 587, 589, 601, 602

*Erler, Karl*—see *Laufenberg, Heinrich*.

## F

*Foch, Ferdinand* (1851-1929)—French marshal; during the First World War, commander of several French armies and then Chief of the French General Staff and Supreme Commander-in-Chief of the Allied forces; in 1918-20, an organiser of armed intervention against Soviet Russia; President of the Supreme Allied Council; took part in drawing up the Treaty of Versailles.—175, 267, 269

## G

*Gallacher, William* (1881-1965)—prominent figure in the British working-class movement, a leader of the Communist Party of Great Britain; committed Left-sectarian mistakes, opposed the Communists' participation in bourgeois parliament and their entry into the Labour Party but under the influence of criticism soon over-

came these mistakes; Chairman of the Executive Committee of the Communist Party of Great Britain (1943-56) and later its President.—338, 339, 340, 346

*Ghe, A. Y.* (d. 1919)—Russian anarchist; after the October Socialist Revolution, supported Soviet power; member of the All-Russia Central Executive Committee (of the third and fourth convocations) and of the North-Caucasian Soviet Government.—531

*Gogol, Nikolai Vasilyevich* (1809-1852)—Russian writer.—53

*Gompers, Samuel* (1850-1924)—a leader of the U.S. trade union movement and of the American Federation of Labour; conducted a policy of class collaboration with capitalists and opposed the working-class revolutionary struggle; was hostile to the October Socialist Revolution and the Soviet state.—64, 316, 319

*Gorbunov, Nikolai Petrovich* (1892-1938)—member of the Bolshevik Party from 1917; after the October Socialist Revolution, was engaged in responsible administrative work.—632

*Graber, Ernest Paul* (b. 1875)—Swiss Social-Democrat; at the beginning of the First World War, joined the internationalists. In early 1917 adopted a pacifist Centrist stand and in 1918 went over to the Right wing of the Swiss Social-Democrats.—60

*Grimm, Robert* (1881-1958)—a leader of the Social-Democratic Party of Switzerland; Centrist during the First World War; an organiser of the Centrist Two-and-a-Half International.—60

*Guesde, Jules* (1845-1922)—a founder and leader of the French socialist movement and of the Second International. Did much to disseminate the ideas of Marxism and develop the socialist movement in France. However, opposing the policy of Right-wing socialists, committed sectarian errors in questions of theory and tactics. On the outbreak of the First World War, adopted a social-chauvinist stand and entered

the bourgeois government of France. In 1920, refused to follow the majority of the Tours Congress of the French Socialist Party, which decided to join the Communist International—329, 357

*Gusev, Sergei Ivanovich (Drabkin, Y. D.)* (1874-1933)—professional revolutionary and Bolshevik; in 1918-20, carried out political work in the Red Army; author of several works on Party history and on questions of war and economy—287, 457

## H

*Haase, Hugo* (1863-1919)—a leader of the German Social-Democratic movement and an opportunist; Centrist during the First World War; in April 1917, was among the founders of the Independent Social-Democratic Party of Germany.—60, 65

*Hegel, Georg Wilhelm Friedrich* (1770-1831)—German philosopher, objective idealist. His historic service to philosophy was his thorough elaboration of dialectics, which became one of the theoretical sources of dialectical materialism—485, 604

*Hempel*—a representative of the Communist Workers' Party of Germany at the Third Congress of the Comintern.—572

*Henderson, Arthur* (1863-1935)—a leader of the Labour Party and the British trade union movement; social-chauvinist during the First World War, member of the British Government. After the February 1917 bourgeois-democratic revolution, came to Russia to agitate for the continuation of the war; a founder of the Berne (Second) International; from 1923, Chairman of the Executive Committee of the so-called Socialist Labour International.—30, 58, 64, 69, 316, 319, 339, 340, 342-46, 352, 363, 649

*Hermann, Ladislaus (L. L.)* (d. 1962)—Austrian political journalist; member of the Communist Party

of Austria (1919 and 1920); contributor to and editor of *Die Rote Fahne*, central organ of the party; in 1920, withdrew from the Party. Having settled in Germany, joined the German Social-Democratic Party; subsequently left for Sweden; opposed communism and the U.S.S.R. in his capacity as an "expert on Eastern affairs".—364

*Hilferding, Rudolf* (1877-1941)—an opportunist leader of the German Social-Democratic movement and of the Second International; theoretician of so-called Austro-Marxism; author of the theory of "organised capitalism", advocate of state-monopoly capitalism. From 1917, leader of the Independent Social-Democratic Party of Germany.—107, 110, 298, 302, 334, 337, 581

*Hillquit, Morris* (1869-1933)—American socialist; first Marxist, then joined the opportunists; a founder of the reformist Socialist Party of the U.S.A. (1901); member of the International Socialist Bureau author of several reformist works on the history of socialism—581

*Hindenburg, Paul* (1847-1934)—German field marshal and statesman, representative of the reactionary and chauvinist elements of German imperialism.—175

*Hoglund, Carl Zeth Konstantin* (1884-1956)—leader of the Left wing of the Social-Democratic and also the youth socialist movement in Sweden; during the First World War, an internationalist joined the Zimmerwald Left group, a leader of the Communist Party of Sweden (1917-24)—327

*Holz, Max* (1889-1933)—German Left-wing Communist. In 1920, led the armed struggle of the workers of Vogtland (Middle Germany) against the putsch headed by General Kapp; expelled from the Communist Party of Germany for anarchist tendencies. In March 1921, headed the armed struggle of the workers' detachments of Middle Germany, for which he was sentenced to imprisonment for life by court martial; while in prison, rejoined

the C.P.G. in 1922. From 1929, on his release, lived and worked in the U.S.S.R.—574

*Horner, K.*—see *Pannekock, Anton.*

*Hyndman, Henry Mayers* (1842-1921)—British socialist, reformist, a leader of the British Socialist Party. In 1916, resigned from the party after the Party Conference in Salford condemned his social-chauvinist standpoint on the imperialist war. Was hostile to the October Revolution.—357

## J

*Jacoby, Johann* (1805-1877)—German publicist, politician, bourgeois democrat. In the sixties, joined the Progressists; took a negative attitude to Bismarck's policy. In 1872, joined the Social-Democratic Party. Though he was not a Marxist, Marx and Engels valued him highly as a democrat who sided with the proletarian movement, though they disagreed with him on many questions.—174

*Juffe, Adolf Abramovich* (1883-1927)—Soviet diplomat; took part in Soviet Russia's negotiations with the governments of a number of capitalist countries.—596

*Jouhaux, Léon* (1879-1954)—a reformist leader of the French and international trade union movement; a Right-wing leader of the Amsterdam International of Trade Unions; chauvinist during the First World War.—316, 319, 367

*Jugashvili, Joseph Vissarionovich*—see *Stalin, Joseph Vissarionovich.*

## K

*Kaledin, Alexei Maximovich* (1861-1918)—tsarist general; after the October Socialist Revolution, a leader of the Cossack counter-revolution on the Don.—50

*Kalinin, Mikhail Ivanovich* (1875-1946)—a leader of the Communist Party and Soviet statesman, member of the Party from 1898; took an active part in the October

1917 armed uprising in Petrograd; Chairman of the All-Russia Central Executive Committee (from March 1919), Chairman of the Central Executive Committee of the U.S.S.R. (from December 1922) and President of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the U.S.S.R. (from 1938).—473

*Kamenev (Rosenfeld), Lev Borisovich* (1883-1936)—member of the Bolshevik Party from 1901. After the February 1917 bourgeois-democratic revolution, opposed the Party's Leninist course towards socialist revolution. In October 1917, Kamenev, together with Zinoviev, published in a semi-Menshevik newspaper *Novaya Zhizn* a statement of disagreement with the Central Committee's resolution on an armed uprising, thus divulging the Party's secret decision and betraying the revolution. Following the October Socialist Revolution, held leading Party and government posts; was expelled from the Party for anti-Party activities.—287, 473, 496, 631-34, 642, 651-52, 672, 680

*Kapp, Wolfgang* (1858-1922)—representative of big German landowners and imperialist militarists. In 1917, a founder of the reactionary Fatherland Party; in March 1920, headed a counter-revolutionary military-monarchist coup d'état.—350, 363, 364

*Karelin, Vladimir Alexandrovich* (1891-1938)—a founder of the Left Socialist-Revolutionary Party and member of its Central Committee; a leader of the Left S. R. revolt in July 1918; fled abroad after its suppression.—531

*Kautsky, Karl* (1854-1938)—a leader of the German Social-Democratic Party and of the Second International; at first a Marxist, then a renegade from Marxism and ideologist of Centrism, the most dangerous and harmful variety of opportunism. After the October Socialist Revolution, openly opposed the proletarian revolution, the dictatorship of the working class,

- the Bolshevik Party and the Soviet state.—17-97, 107, 110, 144, 173, 178, 231, 234-36, 292-93, 298, 302, 332, 334, 336, 337, 357, 363, 364, 387, 537, 551, 581, 622, 708
- Kerensky, Alexander Fyodorovich** (1881-1970) — Socialist-Revolutionary; after the February 1917 bourgeois-democratic revolution, Minister of Justice, Minister of War and Navy and then head of the bourgeois Provisional Government and Supreme Commander-in-Chief. After the October Socialist Revolution, opposed Soviet power.—53, 60, 63, 76, 77, 90, 111, 280, 306, 312, 334, 342, 356, 399, 400, 402, 532, 535
- Kerzhentsev (Lebedev), Platon Mikhailovich** (1881-1940)—member of the R.S.D.L.P. from 1904, Bolshevik; Soviet statesman and Party leader, historian and political journalist.—719
- Keynes, John Maynard** (1883-1946)—British economist, advocate of state-monopoly capitalism. From 1915, held a post in the Treasury. On retirement in 1919, wrote a number of works sharply criticising the economic inefficiency of the system established by the imperialist Peace Treaty of Versailles. From 1921, president of a big British insurance company.—392-93, 395-97, 597
- Khodorovsky, Joseph Isayevich** (1885-1940)—member of the R.S.D.L.P. from 1903; during the October Socialist Revolution, took part in the Moscow uprising; after the Revolution, held various Party, military and government posts.—695
- Kiselyov, Alexei Semyonovich** (1879-1938)—member of the Party from 1898; after the October Socialist Revolution, held responsible government, administrative and trade union posts.—495
- Kolb, Wilhelm** (1870-1918)—German Social-Democrat, opportunist and revisionist; social-chauvinist during the First World War.—58, 59
- Kolkhak, Alexander Vasilyevich** (1873-1920)—tsarist Admiral, monarchist; in 1918-19, a leader of the Russian counter-revolution and henchman of the Entente. After the October Socialist Revolution, supported by the imperialists of the U.S.A., Britain and France, declared himself Supreme Ruler of Russia and headed the military bourgeois-landowner dictatorship in the Urals, Siberia and the Far East. After the Red Army and the mounting revolutionary and guerrilla movement put an end to the revolt, was taken prisoner and shot.—142, 157, 159, 184, 186-93, 196-99, 216-24, 240-41, 244, 258, 262, 267, 275, 280, 306, 325, 429, 445, 518, 554, 593, 625, 669
- Kolegayev, Andrei Lukich** (1887-1937)—Left Socialist-Revolutionary, People's Commissar for Agriculture (from December 1917). In March 1918, withdrew from the Council of People's Commissars since he was against the signing of the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk. After the suppression of the Left S. R. revolt, withdrew from the S. R. Party and joined the R.C.P.(B.); in 1920, was a member of the Collegium of the People's Commissariat for Railways.—72
- Kon, Felix Yakovlevich** (1864-1941)—prominent figure in the Polish working-class revolutionary movement, which he joined in 1882. From 1907, lived abroad. In 1917, returned to Russia and in 1918 became member of the Bolshevik Party; held responsible Party posts.—371
- Kornilov, Lavr Georgiyevich** (1870-1918)—tsarist general, monarchist; Commander-in-Chief of the Russian Army in July and August 1917; in August 1917, headed a counter-revolutionary revolt. After the suppression of the revolt, was arrested but ran away to the Don and became an organiser and then commander of the whiteguard Volunteer Army; killed in the fighting near Yekaterinodar.—53, 62, 76, 350, 364
- Kozlovsky, A.**—tsarist general, an active participant in the Kronstadt

- mutiny; fled abroad after its suppression.—550
- Krasin, Leonid Borisovich* (1870-1926)—prominent Soviet statesman, member of the Party from 1890. After the October Socialist Revolution, held a number of responsible posts: from 1919, was engaged in diplomatic work, in 1922-24, was People's Commissar for Foreign Trade; U.S.S.R. plenipotentiary in France (from 1924) and in Britain (from 1925).—393, 596, 632-34, 656-58, 677
- Krasnov, Pyotr Nikolayevich* (1869-1947)—tsarist general, active participant in the Kornilov revolt in August 1917; in 1918 and 1919, headed the White Cossack army on the Don. Fled abroad in 1919 and continued counter-revolutionary, anti-Soviet activity.—53, 56
- Krestinsky, Nikolai Nikolayevich* (1883-1938)—veteran Party member; People's Commissar for Finance of the R.S.F.S.R. (1918-21). At the Seventh and Eighth congresses of the R.C.P.(B.) was elected to the Central Committee; from December 1919 to March 1921, was Secretary of the R.C.P.(B.) Central Committee.—492
- Kritsman, Lev Natanovich* (1890-1938)—economist, Party member from 1918; in the first years of Soviet power, was engaged in administrative work; author of several works on economics and the agrarian question.—497
- Krupp*—family of industrialists, owners of a big munitions concern, one of the main arsenals of German imperialism.—30
- Kuzhizhanovsky, Gleb Maximilianovich* (1872-1959)—veteran member of the Communist Party, well-known Soviet scientist and power specialist, statesman; in 1920, headed the State Commission for the Electrification of Russia (GOELRO).—684, 685
- Kun, Béla* (1886-1939)—prominent figure in the Hungarian and international working-class movement, a founder and leader of the Communist Party of Hungary. When the Hungarian Soviet

Republic was proclaimed, became People's Commissar for Foreign Affairs and member of the Collegium of the People's Commissariat for War; was, in fact, leader of the Hungarian Soviet Government. Upon the suppression of Soviet power in Hungary, left for Austria and then came to Russia.—566, 567

*Kurayev, Vasily Uladimirovich* (1892-1938)—Party member from 1914. After the October Socialist Revolution, held a number of responsible posts: from March 1920, member of the Collegium of the People's Commissariat for Agriculture, member of the Presidium of the Supreme Economic Council and then leading official in the State Planning Commission of the U.S.S.R.—451

## L

*Lansbury, George* (1859-1940)—a leader of the British Labour Party.—304 329

*Lapinsky, Pavel Ludvigovich* (Levinson, Y.) (1879-1937)—Polish Communist, economist and political journalist. In the 1920s, as an official of the People's Commissariat for Foreign Affairs of the R.S.F.S.R. and U.S.S.R., was engaged in diplomatic work abroad.—395

*Larin, Y. (Lauric, Mikhail Alexandrovich)* (1882-1932)—participant in the Social-Democratic movement from 1901, Menshevik, in August 1917, became member of the Bolshevik Party. After the October Socialist Revolution, held governmental and administrative posts.—497

*Laufenberg, Heinrich (Eiler, Karl)* (1872-1952)—German Left Social-Democrat. After the November 1918 revolution, joined the Communist Party of Germany where he soon headed the "Left" opposition preaching anarcho-syndicalist views and the petty-bourgeois nationalist programme of the so-called national majority. At the end of 1919, became one of the



- organisers of a split in the C.P.G. and of the foundation in April 1920 of the Communist Workers' Party of Germany; late in 1920 was expelled from the C.W.P.G.—309, 336
- Ledebour, Georg* (1850-1947)—a leader of the German Social-Democratic Party; Centrist.—302, 334
- Legien, Karl* (1861-1920)—German Right-wing Social-Democrat; a trade union leader; extreme social-chauvinist during the First World War; opposed the proletarian revolutionary movement.—302, 316, 319
- Levi (Hartstein), Paul* (1883-1930)—German Social-Democrat, was elected to membership of the C.C. C.P.G. at the Inaugural Congress of the C.P.G.; adopted an extreme Right-wing position; delegate to the Second Congress of the Comintern In February 1921, withdrew from the C.C. C.P.G. and in April was expelled from the Party for anti-Party factional activities; subsequently rejoined the Social-Democratic Party.—392, 396, 566, 569, 574
- Lezhava, Anton Matveyevich* (1870-1937)—Party member from 1904, Soviet statesman; Chairman of the Central Union of Consumer Societies (1918-20), Deputy People's Commissar for Foreign Trade (1920-25).—516
- Lieber (Goldman), Mikhail Isaakovich* (1880-1937)—a Bund leader, social-chauvinist during the First World War. Hostile to the October Socialist Revolution; rabid enemy of the Soviet government. In later years, withdrew from political activity and engaged in administrative work.—56
- Liebknecht, Karl* (1871-1919)—outstanding figure in the German and international working-class movement, a leader of the Left wing of the German Social-Democratic Party; revolutionary internationalist during the First World War; a founder of the Communist Party of Germany and leader of the uprising of Berlin workers in January 1919. Was assassinated by counter-revolutionaries after the suppression of the uprising.—68, 69, 102, 277, 321, 327
- Liebknecht, Wilhelm* (1826-1900)—prominent figure in the German and international working-class movement, a founder and leader of the German Social-Democratic Party; member of the Executive of the German Social-Democratic Party and responsible editor of its central organ, *Vorwärts*; repeatedly elected deputy to the Reichstag, which he used to expose the Prussian Junkers' reactionary home and foreign policy.—649
- Litré, Emile* (1801-1881)—French eclectic philosopher, author of *Dictionnaire de la langue française*, the first edition of which was published between 1863 and 1877.—94
- Litvinov, Maxim Maximovich* (1876-1951)—Party leader and Soviet statesman; member of the R.S.D.L.P. from 1898, Bolshevik. After the October Socialist Revolution, served as a diplomat, Deputy People's Commissar for Foreign Affairs (1921-30).—249, 596
- Lloyd George, David* (1863-1945)—British statesman and diplomat, Liberal Party leader, Prime Minister (1916-22); an instigator and organiser of military intervention against the Soviet State.—268, 340, 341, 343-46, 352, 393, 396, 397
- Longuet, Jean* (1876-1938)—a leader of the French Socialist Party and of the Second International; headed the pacifist Centrist minority of the R.S.P. during the First World War; opposed the affiliation of the party to the Comintern and the foundation of the Communist Party of France. From 1921, member of the Executive Committee of the Two-and-a-Half International; from 1923, a leader of the so-called Socialist Labour International.—30, 58-60, 69, 74, 231, 298, 304, 581
- Lozovsky (Dridzo), Solomon Abra-*

- movich* (1878-1952)—member of the R.S.D.L.P. from 1901, participant in the first Russian revolution (1905-07); from 1909 to 1917, lived abroad where he joined the group of Menshevik conciliators; Chairman of the Moscow Gubernia Council of Trade Unions (1920), General Secretary of the Red International of Labour Unions (1921-37).—468, 472
- Lunacharsky, Anatoly Vasilyevich* (1875-1933)—professional revolutionary, Soviet statesman, People's Commissar for Education (1917-29); Academician (from 1930); journalist and writer, author of several works on art and literature.—424, 425
- Lüttwitz, Walther* (1859-1942)—General representative of the German imperialist militarists; in March 1920, was a leader of the Kapp putsch, a counter-revolutionary revolt organised by the German militarists with a view to restoring the monarchy and establishing a military dictatorship in Germany.—363, 364
- Luxemburg, Rosa* (1871-1919)—outstanding figure in the German, Polish and international working-class movement; a leader of the Left wing of the Second International; founder-member of the Communist Party of Germany. In January 1919, assassinated by counter-revolutionaries.—27, 102, 921
- Lysis (Letailleur), Eugène*—French bourgeois economist, author of several works on financial and political questions.—390
- M**
- MacDonald, James Ramsay* (1866-1937)—British politician, a founder and leader of the Independent Labour Party and of the Labour Party; conducted an extremely opportunist policy and preached the theory of class collaboration and gradual transition from capitalism to socialism; in 1913-20, tried to hamper the British workers' struggle against anti-Soviet intervention; Prime Minister (1924, 1929-31 and 1931-35)—58, 60, 69, 74, 231, 339, 340, 399, 401, 551, 581
- Mavsky Ivan Mikhailovich* (b 1884)—member of the R.S.D.L.P. from 1903, Menshevik until 1918; in February 1921, joined the R.C.P.(B.). From 1922, was engaged in diplomatic work.—192, 551
- Makhno, Nestor Ivanovich* (1884-1934)—head of the counter-revolutionary kulak anarchist bands in the Ukraine fighting against the Soviet government in 1918-21.—429
- Malinovsky, Roman Vatslavovich* (1876-1918)—deputy of the Fourth Duma from the workers' curia of Moscow Gubernia, member of the Bolshevik group in the Duma. Subsequently exposed as provocateur and secret agent of the tsarist political police. In 1918, was tried by the Supreme Tribunal of the All Russia Central Executive Committee and shot.—311, 312
- Marchlewski, Julian* (1866-1925)—prominent figure in the Polish and international working-class movement, an organiser and leader of the Social-Democratic Party of the Kingdom of Poland and Lithuania; took an active part in the 1905-07 Revolution. From 1909, worked mainly in the German Social-Democratic Party, a founder of the Spartacus League and of the Communist International.—378
- Maring, Henrik* (1882-1942)—Dutch Social-Democrat; from 1913 to 1919, lived on Java, where he joined the Left Social-Democrats and later became a member of the Communist parties of Java and Holland; delegate to the Second Congress of the Communist International.—405
- Marinov, L. (Tsederbaum, Yuli Osipovich)* (1873-1923)—a Menshevik leader; Centrist during the First World War. After the February 1917 bourgeois-democratic revolution, member of the Executive Committee of the Petro-

- grad Soviet of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies; after the October Socialist Revolution, opposed Soviet power; left for Germany in 1920.—41, 42, 44, 45, 173, 197, 235, 236, 333, 334, 551-53, 556, 581
- Marx, Karl* (1818-1883).—19-29, 35, 36, 40, 43, 48, 55, 58, 59, 62, 65, 67, 72, 75, 86, 87, 92-95, 99, 105, 114, 140, 142, 144, 161, 162, 178, 200, 302, 309, 317, 328, 332, 412, 413, 532-34, 566, 592, 602, 604, 619, 637, 653, 657, 705, 707
- Maslov, Pyotr Pavlovich* (1867-1946)—Social-Democrat, economist, author of several works on the agrarian question in which he attempted to revise the basic propositions of Marxist political economy.—71, 73, 77, 84, 86
- Maslov, Semyon Leontyevich* (b. 1873)—Right Socialist-Revolutionary, Minister of Agriculture in the bourgeois Provisional Government in September-October 1917; after the October Socialist Revolution, held administrative posts and worked in research establishments.—77, 80, 84
- Mdivani, Polikarp Gugenovich* (1877-1937)—member of the R.S.D.L.P. from 1903; member of the Caucasian Bureau of the Central Committee of the R.C.P.(B) (1920-21), Chairman of the Revolutionary Committee of Georgia (in June 1921). Adopted an incorrect stand on the questions of forming the Transcaucasian Federation and founding the U.S.S.R. and, in fact, sought to preserve Georgia's isolation. The Georgian Party organisation defined the attitude taken by him and his followers as a deviation towards nationalism.—651, 652
- Merrheim, Alphonse* (1881-1925)—French trade unionist, syndicalist; a leader of the General Confederation of Labour of France. During the First World War, was at first an internationalist, but then became an open social-chauvinist and reformist; hostile to the U.S.S.R.—316, 367
- Millerand, Alexandre Etienne* (1859-1943)—French politician, member of the reactionary bourgeois government from 1899, was expelled from the Socialist Party in 1904 and formed, together with former socialists (Briand and Viviani), a group of Independent Socialists; held various posts in the government; President of the French Republic (1920-24).—267
- Milyukov, Pavel Nikolayevich* (1859-1943)—a founder and leader of the Constitutional-Democratic Party; in 1917, Minister for Foreign Affairs in the first bourgeois Provisional Government; conducted a policy of continuing the imperialist war "to a victorious conclusion"; an instigator of the Kornilov revolt in August 1917. After the October Socialist Revolution, helped organise foreign military intervention against Soviet Russia.—53, 550-56, 565
- Milyutin, Vladimir Pavlovich* (M-n, U.) (1884-1938)—Social-Democrat, at first a Menshevik and from 1910 a Bolshevik. At the Second All-Russia Congress of Soviets became a member of the Council of People's Commissars as People's Commissar for Agriculture. In November 1917, advocated the formation of a coalition government with the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries and, declaring his disagreement with the Party's policy, resigned from the Central Committee and from the government, in 1918-21, Deputy Chairman of the Supreme Economic Council, and subsequently engaged in other government and administrative work.—480, 497
- Miroshnikov, Ivan Ivanovich* (1894-1939)—Bolshevik from March 1917; in 1921-37, Deputy Manager of the Council of People's Commissars and then Manager of the C.P.C.—622
- Modigliani, Vittorio Emmanuele* (1872-1947)—veteran of the Italian Socialist Party, reformist; Centrist during the First World War; delegate to the Zimmerwald and Kienthal conferences; opposed the Zimmerwald Left group.—365

*Muraviov Mikhail Artemyevich* (1880 1918)—officer of the tsarist army Left Socialist Revolutionary after the October Socialist Revolution In July 1918 as commander in chief of the Eastern Front betrayed the Soviet government his attempt to raise a mutiny among the troops was discovered and forestalled—77 197

## N

*Naine Charles* (1874 1926)—a leader of the Swiss Social Democratic Party At the beginning of the First World War an internationalist then a Centrist and soon went over to the Right wing of the Swiss Social Democratic Party In 1919 stood for the restoration of the Second International in 1919 21 took part in founding the Centrist Two and a Half International—60

*Nansen Fridtjof* (1861 1930) Norwegian scientist explorer of the Arctic and well known public figure During the First World War worked to improve the condition of prisoners of war in various countries after the war Commissioner of the League of Nations responsible for the repatriation of prisoners of war In 1921 organised an international relief commission to help the famine-stricken population of Russia—249

*Napoleon I (Bonaparte)* (1769 1821)—Emperor of France (1804 14 and 1815)—525 552 707

*Natanson Mark Andreyevich* (1850 1919)—revolutionary Narodnik and later a Socialist Revolutionary took part in the revolutionary movement from 1869 after the February 1917 bourgeois democratic revolution an organiser of the Left Socialist Revolutionary Party in 1918 condemned the Left SR revolt against Soviet power—333

*Nicholas the Bloody*—see *Nicholas II (Romanov)*

*Nicholas II (Romanov)* *Nicholas*

*Obmanov* i.e. 'Nicholas the Deceiver' (1868-1918)—last tsar of Russia reigned from 1894 until the February 1917 bourgeois democratic revolution—61, 303

*Nobs Ernst* (1886 1957)—a leader of the Swiss Social Democratic Party internationalist during the First World War in 1917 adopted a pacifist Centrist stand in 1920 went over to the Right wing of the Swiss Social Democratic Party—60

*Noske Gustav* (1868 1946)—an opportunist leader of the German Social Democratic Party In 1918 during the November Revolution in Germany helped organise the suppression of the sailors' revolutionary movement in Kiel War Minister (1919 20) organised massacre of Berlin workers and the assassination of Karl Liebknecht and Rosa Luxemburg—398 340 357 649

*N R* 16

## O

*Obolenky Valerian Valerianovich*—see *Osinsky N*

*Oldenburg S S* (d 1940)—political reviewer on the whiteguard journal *Russkaya Mysl* published in Prague in 1922—650

*Orynikov Gregory Konstantinovich* (1886 1937)—a leader of the Communist Party and Soviet statesman member of the CPSD P from 1903 Bolshevik After the October Socialist Revolution was engaged in high level Party and government work Chairman of the Central Bureau of the Central Committee (1921 26) from 1921 member of the Party Central Committee—33 385 689 691

*Orlando Vittorio Emanuele* (1860 1952)—Italian statesman Prime Minister (1917 19) head of the Italian delegation at the Paris Peace Conference Speaker of Parliament (1919 20)—39

*Osinsky N* (*Obolenky Valerian Valerianovich*) (1887 1935)—member of the Bolshevik Party from

1907. After the October Socialist Revolution, held government, Party and administrative posts; in 1920-21, was active in the anti-Party Democratic Centralism group; in 1923, joined the Trotskyist opposition.—108, 557

*Ostrogorsky, M. Y.* (b. 1854)—liberal bourgeois journalist, jurist, member of the First Duma, author of the book *La démocratie et les partis politiques* containing a wealth of factual material from the history of Britain and the U.S.A. and exposing the real essence of bourgeois democracy.—97

*Owen, Robert* (1771-1858)—British utopian socialist.—702

## P

*Pankhurst, Sylvia Estelle* (1882-1960)—active member of the English working-class movement. After the October Socialist Revolution, advocated cessation of armed intervention against Soviet Russia; leader of the extreme Left Labour Socialist Federation. In 1921, joined the Communist Party, but was soon expelled for refusing to submit to Party discipline.—338, 340, 342, 346

*Pannekoek, Anton* (*Horner, K.*) (1873-1960)—Dutch Social-Democrat; internationalist during the First World War; in 1918-21, was a member of the Communist Party of Holland and took part in the work of the Comintern; adopted an ultra-Left sectarian position. In 1921, resigned from the Party and soon abandoned active political work.—309, 312, 336

*Petlyura, Simon Vasilyevich* (1877-1926)—a leader of the Ukrainian bourgeois nationalists; secretary-general for army affairs in the counter-revolutionary Ukrainian Central Rada (1917); a leader of the Ukrainian counter-revolutionaries in the period of military intervention and civil war.—371, 429

*Petrovsky, Grigory Ivanovich* (1878-1958)—member of the

R.S.D.L.P. from 1897, member of the Bolshevik group in the Fourth Duma. After the October Socialist Revolution, was engaged in Party and government work.—473

*Pilsudski, Joseph* (1867-1935)—Polish reactionary statesman, head of the Polish bourgeois-landowner state (1918-22); brutally suppressed the workers' revolutionary movement. In 1920, was among the organisers of Poland's war against the Soviet state.—593

*Platten, Friedrich (Fritz)* (1883-1942)—Swiss Left Social-Democrat and then Communist; internationalist during the First World War; participant in the Zimmerwald and Kienthal conferences, supported the Zimmerwald Left group. In 1919, took part in founding the Third, Communist International; founder-member of the Communist Party of Switzerland, and its Secretary (1921-23).—110

*Plekhanov, Georgi Valentinovich* (1856-1918)—a leader of the Russian and international working-class movement; first propagandist of Marxism in Russia; in 1883, founded in Geneva the first Russian Marxist organisation—the Emancipation of Labour group. After the Second Congress of the R.S.D.L.P. (1903), assumed a conciliatory attitude towards opportunism and then joined the Mensheviks; during the First World War, adopted a social-chauvinist stand. After the February 1917 bourgeois-democratic revolution in Russia, headed *Yedinstvo*, the extreme Right group of the Menshevik defencists; opposed the Bolsheviks and the socialist revolution, maintaining that Russia was not yet ripe for socialism. His attitude to the October Socialist Revolution was negative, but he did not take part in the struggle against Soviet power.—17, 18, 48, 59, 71, 302, 333, 353, 357, 485, 599

*Podbelsky, Vadim Nikolayevich* (1887-1920)—a Communist Party leader and Soviet statesman, Peo-

- ple's Commissar for Posts and Telegraphs of the R.S.F.S.R. (from May 1918).—131, 135
- Poincaré, Raymond* (1860-1934)—French politician and statesman, several times a member of the French Government; expressed the interests of the most aggressive circles of the French bourgeoisie. After the October Socialist Revolution, helped organise military intervention against Soviet Russia. Prime Minister of France (1922-24 and 1926-29); his policy was openly anti-Soviet and anti-communist.—631
- Poole, Dewitt Clinton* (1885-1952)—American diplomat; from November 1918 to June 1919, acted as American chargé d'affaires to the whiteguard Provisional Government of the Northern Region; an organiser of the Entente's intervention against Soviet Russia and of the counter-revolutionary actions within the country.—249
- Popov, Pavel Ilyich* (1872-1950)—statistician; from 1918, Manager of the Central Statistical Board, member of the Presidium of the U.S.S.R. State Planning Commission, author of several works on statistics.—517
- Potresov, Alexander Nikolayevich* (1869-1934)—a Menshevik leader; social-chauvinist during the First World War; after the October Socialist Revolution, emigrated and attacked Soviet Russia from abroad.—56, 333
- Procbrazhensky, Yevgeny Alexeyevich* (1886-1937)—member of the Bolshevik Party from 1903; after the October Socialist Revolution, carried out Party work and political work in the army; "Left Communist" in 1918; during the discussion on the trade unions (1920-21), supported Trotsky's views and from 1923 was an active member of the Trotskyist opposition.—459, 467, 468, 473, 514
- Proshyan, Prosha Perchevich* (1883-1918)—Socialist-Revolutionary; in December 1917, appointed People's Commissar for Posts and Telegraphs. In March 1918, in to-

ken of protest against the signing of the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk, withdrew from the Council of People's Commissars; took part in the Left S. R. revolt in Moscow; after its defeat, gave up political activity.—77

- Pyatakov, Georgi Leonidovich* (1890-1937)—Russian Social-Democrat, Bolshevik; member of the Ukrainian Soviet Government after the October Socialist Revolution; from 1920, was engaged in administrative and government work; repeatedly opposed the Party's Leninist policy and was expelled from the Party.—131, 136, 138, 455, 681, 684, 685

## Q

- Quelch, Tom* (1886-1954)—British socialist and then Communist; internationalist during the First World War. From 1919, actively supported the formation of a Communist Party in Great Britain; delegate to the Second Congress of the Comintern; in 1920, joined the Communist Party, and from 1923 to 1925 was a member of its Central Committee; in his last years, left the Communist Party.—409

## R

- Radek, Karl Berngardovich* (1885-1939)—participant in the Social-Democratic movement in Galicia, Poland and Germany; internationalist during the First World War; Bolshevik from 1917; "Left Communist" at the time of the Brest-Litovsk Treaty; in 1923, became an active member of the Trotskyist opposition; was expelled from the Party for anti-Party activities.—304, 567, 568, 570, 573, 574, 577
- Rakosi, Matyás* (1892-1971)—member of the Communist Party of Hungary from 1918, member of the revolutionary government after the establishment of Soviet administration in Hungary (March

- 21-August 1, 1919); member of the Executive Committee of the Comintern (1920-24); in 1921, was elected Secretary of the Executive Committee of the Communist International.—622
- Rakovsky, Christian Georgiyevich** (1873-1941)—participant in the Social-Democratic movement of Bulgaria, Rumania, Switzerland and France from the early 1890s; member of the Bolshevik Party from 1917; after the October Socialist Revolution, was engaged in Party and government work.—596
- Renaudel, Pierre** (1871-1935)—a reformist leader of the French Socialist Party; social-chauvinist; editor of *L'Humanité* (1914-20); member of the Chamber of Deputies (1914-19 and 1924).—30, 58, 64, 69, 304, 649
- Renner, Karl** (1870-1950)—Austrian politician, leader and theoretician of the Austrian Right-wing Social-Democrats; an ideologist of so-called Austro-Marxism; social chauvinist during the First World War; Chancellor of Austria (1919-20).—298, 304
- Richter, Eugen** (1838-1906)—a leader of the German "Party of Free-Thinkers" which expressed the views of the liberal bourgeoisie; enemy of socialism; author of *Sozialdemokratische Zukunftsbilder*, a book directed against the Social-Democrats. Writing about the legendary "thrifty Agnesse", Richter tried to prove that there was equality between the working people and the bourgeoisie.—57
- Rodbertus-Jagetzow, Johann Karl** (1805-1875)—German vulgar economist and politician; advocated the reactionary ideas of Prussian "state socialism".—86
- Rodzyanko, Mikhail Uladimirovich** (1859-1924)—big landowner; a leader of the Octobrist Party; monarchist. During the February 1917 bourgeois-democratic revolution, organised a counter-revolutionary centre, the Provisional Committee of the Duma, and then the Private Conference of Duma members; a leader of the Kornilov revolt. After the October Socialist Revolution, joined Denikin and tried to unite counter-revolutionary forces to fight Soviet power; subsequently emigrated.—312
- Roy, Manabendra Nath** (1892-1948)—Indian politician; took part in the revolutionary movement against the British colonialists in 1910-15; emigrated in 1915. Subsequently joined the Communists; lived in Mexico until 1920. Delegate to the Second, Third, Fourth and Fifth congresses of the Comintern; from 1922, was a candidate member and from 1924, a full member, of the Executive Committee of the Communist International.—405, 408
- Rozhkov, Nikolai Alexandrovich** (1868-1927)—historian and political journalist; Menshevik; hostile to the October Revolution, fought against Soviet power during the foreign military intervention and the Civil War. Subsequently broke with the Mensheviks and took up research, teaching and administrative work.—550
- Rudzutak, Yan Ernestovich** (1887-1938)—prominent figure in the Communist Party and Soviet statesman; member of the R.S.D.L.P. from 1905; Bolshevik; leading trade union worker after the October Socialist Revolution; from 1920, member of the R.C.P.(B.) Central Committee. member of the Presidium and Secretary-General of the All-Russia Central Council of Trade Unions.—470, 473-78
- Rykov, Alexei Ivanovich** (1881-1938)—member of the Bolshevik Party from 1899. After the October Socialist Revolution, held a number of official posts; member of the Political Bureau of the Central Committee; repeatedly opposed the Leninist Party line. In 1937, was expelled from the Party for anti-Party activities.—132, 455, 457, 473, 642, 643, 652, 672

## S

- Savinkov, Boris Viktorovich* (1879-1925)—a Socialist-Revolutionary leader; after the October Socialist Revolution, organiser of several counter-revolutionary revolts and of military intervention against the Soviet Republic; whiteguard émigré.—56, 76
- Scheidemann, Philipp* (1865-1939)—a leader of the extreme Right, opportunist wing of the German Social-Democratic Party. During the November 1918 revolution in Germany, a member of the so-called Council of People's Representatives whose activities were determined by the interests of the counter-revolutionary bourgeoisie; from February to June 1919, headed the coalition government of the Weimar Republic and was an organiser of the brutal suppression of the working-class movement in 1918-21; subsequently gave up political activity.—30, 35, 59, 63, 64, 68-70, 106, 110, 265, 298, 334, 336, 340, 342, 352-357, 363, 400, 649
- Schmidt Vasily Vladimirovich* (1886-1940)—member of the Bolshevik Party from 1905; Secretary of the All-Russia Central Council of Trade Unions (1918-28) and then People's Commissar for Labour.—125
- Schroder, Karl* (1884-1950)—German Left Social-Democrat, writer and political journalist. After the November 1918 revolution in Germany, joined the Communist Party, sided with the "Left" opposition of Laufenberg Wolffheim, and advocated anarcho-sindicalist views. After the expulsion of the "Left" opposition from the Communist Party in October 1919, took part in founding the Communist Workers' Party of Germany, but soon withdrew and re-joined the German Social-Democratic Party.—309
- Serebryakov, Leonid Petrovich* (1888-1937)—member of the Bolshevik Party from 1905. After the October Socialist Revolution, member of the Moscow Regional Party Committee, Secretary of the Central Committee of the R.C.P.(B.) and Secretary of the All-Russia Central Executive Committee. Supported Trotsky during the discussion on the trade unions (1920-21)—467, 478
- Sreda, Semyon Pafnutyevich* (1871-1933)—member of the Bolshevik Party from 1903; Soviet statesman; People's Commissar for Agriculture of the R.S.F.S.R. (1918-21); from 1921, member of the Presidium of the Supreme Economic Council and the State Planning Commission; Deputy Manager and then Manager of the Central Statistical Board of the R.S.F.S.R.—254
- Sergeyev, Fyodor Andreyevich*—see *Artyom*
- Serrati, Giacinto Menotti* (1872-1926)—prominent figure in the Italian working class movement, a leader of the Italian Socialist Party, internationalist during the First World War, participant in the Zimmerwald and Kienthal conferences. At the Second Congress of the Comintern, headed the Italian delegation, opposed the unconditional break with the reformists, joined the Italian Communist Party in 1924.—328, 568
- Sher Vasily Vladimirovich* (1884-1940)—Russian Social-Democrat, Menshevik; after the October Socialist Revolution, worked in the Central Union of Consumer Societies, the Supreme Economic Council, and the State Bank.—182
- Sheridon, Clare* (b. 1885)—English sculptor; came to Moscow in September 1920 and made a sculpture of Lenin.—514
- Shlyapnikov, Alexander Gavrilovich* (1885-1937)—member of the Bolshevik Party from 1901, People's Commissar for Labour after the October Socialist Revolution, subsequently carried on trade union and administrative work; organiser and leader of the anti-Party Workers' Opposition group (1920-22)—405
- Smolal, Bogumir* (1850-1941)—prominent figure in the Czechoslovak and international working-class



- movement; founder-member of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia; took an active part in the leadership of the revolutionary and national liberation movement of the Czechoslovak working class. From 1918, headed the struggle of the Left wing of Social-Democracy for the creation of a working-class Marxist-Leninist party. When the Communist Party was founded in 1921, became a member of its Central Committee. In 1921-29 and from 1935 on, was on the Executive Committee of the Comintern.—570
- Snowden, Philip* (1864-1937)—British politician, (Chairman of the Independent Labour Party (1903-06 and 1917-20), representative of its Right wing; Centrist during the First World War; advocated coalition with the bourgeoisie.—339, 340, 342-46, 363
- Sokolnikov (Brilliant), Grigory Yakovlevich* (1888-1939)—member of the Bolshevik Party from 1905; after the October Socialist Revolution, held Party and government posts; member and candidate member of the Central Committee; subsequently expelled from the Party for anti-Party activities.—623, 651, 653-55
- Sorokin, Pitirim Alexandrovich* (1889-1968)—Socialist-Revolutionary; assistant-professor at Petrograd University until 1917; taught sociology at Petrograd higher educational establishments in 1919-22; expelled from the country for counter-revolutionary activities.—605, 606
- Sosnovsky, Lev Semyonovich* (1886-1937)—member of the Bolshevik Party from 1904; editor of the newspaper *Bednota* from 1918 to 1924 (intermittently); in 1920 and 1921, supported Trotsky during the discussion on the trade unions; subsequently expelled from the Party for anti-Party activities.—471-73
- Spartacus* (d. 71 B.C.)—Roman gladiator, leader of one of the biggest slave revolts in Rome (73-71 B.C.)—209
- Spengler, Oswald* (1880-1936)—German idealist philosopher, ideological predecessor of German fascism.—648, 649
- Stalin (Jugashvili), Joseph Vissarionovich* (1879-1953)—473, 651-59, 680-81, 689, 691
- Stein (Rubinstein), A.* (1881-1948)—Russian Menshevik, emigrated to Germany in 1906; joined the Independent Social-Democratic Party of Germany in 1917 and was editor of its central organ, *Freiheit*; took an active part in the campaign launched by the German Centrists to discredit the October Socialist Revolution.—41, 47, 89
- Strasser, Joseph* (b. 1871)—Austrian politician; sought to create within the Austrian Social-Democratic Party a Left wing against the Right-wingers and Centrists; became a Communist Party member in 1918—570
- Struve, Pyotr Berngardovich* (1870-1944)—bourgeois economist and political journalist; a leader of the Constitutional-Democratic Party; representative of "legal Marxism", a Russian variety of Bernsteinism; an ideologist of Russian imperialism. After the October Socialist Revolution, member of Wrangel's counter-revolutionary government; subsequently fled abroad.—17, 333
- Sudekum, Albert* (1871-1944)—an opportunist leader of German Social-Democracy; revisionist, social-chauvinist during the First World War.—649
- Sukhanov, N. (Gimmer, Nikolai Nikolayevich)* (b. 1882)—economist and journalist of petty-bourgeois orientations; Menshevik; during the First World War declared himself to be an internationalist. After the October Socialist Revolution, held posts in Soviet economic departments and institutions. In his works, Lenin sharply criticised Sukhanov's Menshevik views.—704-08
- Sunitsa, L. B.* (b. 1887)—member of the Bolshevik Party from 1905. After the October Socialist Revolution, was engaged in Party and educational work.—131

*Sun Yat-sen* (1866-1925)—Chinese revolutionary democrat and statesman.—486

*Sverdlov, Yakov Mikhailovich* (1885-1919)—a leader of the Communist Party and Soviet statesman; Party member from 1901; took an active part in the preparations for and carrying out of the October Socialist Revolution.—272

*Svidersky, Alexander Ivanovich* (1878-1933)—Soviet statesman; Party member from 1899; Bolshevik. After the October Socialist Revolution, member of the Board of the People's Commissariat for Food and of the Board of the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection.—453

*Svinhufvud, Pehr Evind* (1861-1944)—Finnish politician and statesman, head of the bourgeois government of Finland (1917 and 1918), which conducted a policy of terror against the Finnish workers' revolution.—117

## T

*Terracini, Umberto* (b 1895)—prominent figure in the Italian working-class movement, founder member of the Italian Communist Party; adopted an irreconcilable attitude to reformists; committed Left-sectarian errors, for which Lenin criticised him at the Third Congress of the Comintern.—570-73, 575-77

*Thalheimer, August* (1884-1948)—German Social-Democrat, political journalist, internationalist during the First World War; member of the *Internationale* group, subsequently renamed the Spartacus group and then the Spartacus League in 1918-23, member of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Germany and editor of its central organ, *Die Rote Fahne*; leader of the Party's Right wing. In 1923, was partly responsible for the defeat of the October armed uprising of the Hamburg workers, for which he was withdrawn from the

Party's leading posts. Expelled from the C.P.G. in 1929.—566-67

*Thomas, Albert* (1878-1932)—French politician, Right-wing socialist, social-chauvinist during the First World War; member of the French bourgeois government as Under-Secretary for Armaments. After the February 1917 bourgeois-democratic revolution, came to Russia to agitate for the continuation of the war. In 1919 was among the organisers of the Berne (Second) International, and in 1919-32, headed the International Labour Office under the League of Nations.—402

*Timiryazev, Arkady Klementyevich* (1860-1955)—professor, doctor of physics and mathematics; member of the R.C.P.(B.) from 1921; author of more than 100 research works on theoretical physics and history and methodology of physics; did important work on the training of research physicists.—603-04

*Todorsky, Alexander Ivanovich* (1894-1965)—member of the Bolshevik Party from 1918; in 1918-19, member of the Executive Committee of Vsesyegonsk Uyezd, Tver Gubernia; editor of the *Bulletin of the Vsesyegonsk Soviet of Deputies* and the newspaper *Krasny Vsesyegonsk*; author of the book *A Year with a Rifle and a Plough*, highly thought of by Lenin.—628

*Tomsky, Mikhail Pavlovich* (1880-1936)—member of the Bolshevik Party from 1904. After the October Socialist Revolution, Chairman of the Moscow Council of Trade Unions; from 1919, Chairman of the Presidium of the All-Russia Central Council of Trade Unions; member of the C.C. R.C.P.(B.) and of the Political Bureau of the C.C. R.C.P.(B.); repeatedly opposed the Party's Leninist policy.—467, 468, 470, 473, 495

*Trèves, Claudio* (1868-1933)—a reformist leader of the Italian Socialist Party, Centrist during the First World War. Was hostile to the October Socialist Revolution. After a split in the I.S.P. (1922).

became a leader of the reformist Unitarian Socialist Party—36.  
*Ivotsky (Bronstein) Iev Davidovich* (1879 1940)—Russian Social Democrat Menshevik liquidator after the defeat of the 1905 07 Revolution, opposed Lenin and the other Bolsheviks on the questions of war peace and revolution (Centrist during the First World War. In 1917 became a member of the Bolshevik Party but did not adopt a Bolshevik position and waged in overt and covert struggle against Leninism against the Party's policy. After the October Socialist Revolution held responsible posts, opposed the Party's general line and the programme of building socialism in the USSR. In 1927 expelled from the Party, in 1929 banished from the USSR for anti Soviet activities and in 1932 deprived of Soviet citizenship. 45 57 165 00 192 96 599 680 81 685 684

*Isvestitskiy Irakly Georgievich* (1852 1939)—a Menshevik leader, in May 1917 entered the bourgeois Provisional Government as Minister of Posts and Telegraphs, subsequently became Minister of the Interior and as such helped in to get the persecution of the Bolsheviks. After the October Socialist Revolution was a leader of the counter revolutionary Menshevik government of Georgia, fled abroad after the victory of Soviet power there—7.

*Izyurupa Alexander Dmitriyevich* (1870 1928)—prominent figure in the Communist Party and Soviet statesman, member of the RSDLP from 1898, Bolshevik. After the October Socialist Revolution, Deputy People's Commissar and from early 1918, People's Commissar for Food of the RSFSR, from late 1921, Deputy Chairman of the Council of People's Commissars and of the Council of Labour and Defence—631 642 643 672

*Iuriati Iulippo* (1857 1932)—prominent figure in the Italian working class movement, founder member of the Italian Socialist Party, leader

of its Right reformist wing (Centrist during the First World War, hostile to the October Socialist Revolution. After a split in the ISP (1922) headed the reformist Unitarian Socialist Party—60 65 64 65 295 325, 365 368 381

*Iurgencz Ivan Sergeyevich* (1815 1883)—Russian writer—615

## U

*Ugihart Isidre* (1874 1933)—British financier and industrialist, owner of big mining enterprises in Tsarist Russia. After the October Socialist Revolution helped organise the anti Soviet struggle, in 1922 took part in the Genoa and Hague conferences as an expert with the British delegation, in 1921 and 1922 conducted negotiations with the Soviet Government to obtain concessions on his former enterprise in Russia—596 677

*Ustyuzhnikov V. P.* (b 1890)—lawyer and journalist, prominent figure in the Constitutional Democratic Party, head of the Press Bureau in Kolchak's government (1918). Fled abroad after the defeat of Kolchak, in 1921 22 contributed to a collection and a journal both called *Smena Vekh* and published in Prague and Paris, was one of the ideologists of the *Smena Vekh* trend—626

## V

*Vaillant Edouard Marie* (1810 1915)—French socialist, a leader of the Second International and founder member of the Socialist Party of France (1901), social chauvinist during the First World War—229

*Valk Menshevik* during the Kronstadt mutiny was member of the so called Provisional Revolutionary Committee, fled abroad after the defeat of the mutiny—550

*Vanderlip Washington B.* (b 1866)—U.S. engineer and industrialist who came to Russia in 1920 to conduct negotiations with the So-

vict Government for oil and coal concessions on Kamchatka—31)  
*Undervelde Emile* (1866-1935)—a leader of the Belgian Workers Party. Chairman of the International Socialist Bureau of the Second International an opportunist. During the First World War adopted a social chauvinist stand and was a member of the Belgian bourgeois government. Was hostile to the October Socialist Revolution and actively helped in organising armed intervention against Soviet Russia—92-97

*Urdin Louis Eugene* (1839-1871)—French revolutionary prominent figure in the First International and the Paris Commune of 1871. During the Paris Commune was a member of its Council government and sided with its Left minority. Fought heroically on the barricades, was shot without trial by the Versailles men—649

*Usty U K* (b. 1877)—Socialist Revolutionary member of the Constituent Assembly. Chairman of the counter-revolutionary Committee of Members of the Constituent Assembly in Samara which in summer 1918 established its power with the help of foreign interventionists in the Volga and the Urals areas. Subsequently gave up his struggle against Soviet power and became a member of the Central Organising Bureau of the Minority of the Socialist revolutionary Party which published the magazine *Narod*—197

*Ustyak Vatsla Vatslovich* (b. 1892)—professional revolutionary Bolshevik Party member. Soviet diplomat, political journalist and literary critic—396

## W

*Webb Beatrice* (1858-1943) and *Sidney* (1859-1947)—English public figures, founders of the Fabian Society, authors of several books on the history and theory of the English working class movement, social chauvinists during the First World War—30

*Weyling, Wilhelm* (1808-1871)—prominent figure in the German working class movement at its inception, a theoretician of utopian militarism, communism, active member of the League of the Just—25

*Weydel Friedrich* (1886-1960)—German Left Social Democrat. In 1915 joined the Communist Party of Germany sided with the Left opposition and discussed anarcho-syndicalist views. After the Left opposition was expelled from the C.P.G. took part in founding the Communist Workers Party of Germany. Expelled from the C.W.P.G. in 1920 re-joined the German Social Democratic Party shortly afterwards—100

*Weyland Karl* Berlin correspondent of the American Universal Service Agency—264-66

*Weyland David* (1877-1941)—Dutch Left Social Democrat, later Communist. During the First World War was an internationalist and contributed to the magazine *Wroba* theoretical organ of the Zimmerwald Left group. As a leader of the Communist Party of Holland adopted an ultra-Left sectarian position at the Second Congress of the Comintern, was elected member of the Executive Committee of the Communist International—69-70

*Weyland H. Homer Fern* (1890-1941)—German Engineer and Communist (Pravda 1938-1941)—642

*Weyland Wladimir* (1860-1934)—USSR President (1913-21) prominent figure in intervention of the imperialist forces against Soviet Russia—119, 125, 60-67

*Weyland Robert Yuryevich* (1890-1941)—historian, professor of Moscow University—60

*Weyland Emil*—German Left Social Democrat, political journalist. After the November 1918 revolution in Germany joined the Communist Party of Germany and headed together with Heinrich Laubacher, the Left opposition which spread anarcho-syndicalist views. When the Left opposition

was expelled from the C.P.G., took part in founding the Communist Workers' Party of Germany. Was expelled from the C.W.P.G. late in 1920, and subsequently withdrew from the working-class movement.—309

*Wrangel, Pyotr Nikolayevich* (1878-1928)—tsarist general, baron, rabid monarchist, henchman of the British, French and U.S. imperialists during the foreign military intervention and the Civil War; commander-in-chief of the white-guard Armed Forces of the South of Russia (April to November, 1920); fled abroad when these forces were routed by the Red Army.—432, 436, 593

## Y

*Yemshanov, Alexander Ivanovich* (1891-1941)—Party member from 1917, railwayman, People's Commissar for Railways (1920-21), subsequently worked in the People's Commissariat for Railways.—456

*Yermansky, A. (Kogan, Osip Arkadyevich)* (1866-1941)—Social-Democrat, Menshevik; Centrist during the First World War; member of the Menshevik Central Committee (1918). Withdrew from the Menshevik Party in 1921, and carried out research work in Moscow.—719

*Yudenich, Nikolai Nikolayevich* (1862-1933)—tsarist general; after the October Socialist Revolution, member of the counter-revolutionary North-Western Government; commander-in-chief of the white-guard North-Western army; was widely supported by the Entente imperialists. Defeated by the Red Army in November 1919, retreated to Estonia and later went to England.—217, 221, 226, 240, 241, 244, 275, 313, 429, 512, 593

## Z

*Zasulich, Vera Ivanovna* (1849-1919)—prominent figure in the Narod-

nik and, later, the Social-Democratic movement in Russia; took part in the foundation and activities of the Emancipation of Labour group. In 1900, joined the editorial staff of the newspapers *Iskra* and *Zarya*; after the Second Congress of the R.S.D.L.P., became a Menshevik leader; her attitude to the October Socialist Revolution was negative.—333

*Zax, G. D.* (1882-1937)—Socialist-Revolutionary, an organiser of the Left Socialist-Revolutionary Party; took an active part in the Left S.R. revolt in July 1918; joined the Bolshevik Party in November 1918.—72

*Zinoviev (Radomyslsky), Grigory Yevseyevich* (1883-1936)—member of the Bolshevik Party from 1901; during the preparations for and the accomplishment of the October Socialist Revolution, displayed vacillation and was opposed to the armed uprising. Together with Kamenev, published in the semi-Menshevik newspaper *Novaya Zhizn* a statement of disagreement with the Central Committee's resolution on an armed uprising, thus divulging the Party's secret decision and betraying the revolution. After the October Socialist Revolution, was Chairman of the Petrograd Soviet, member of the Central Committee's Political Bureau and Chairman of the Executive Committee of the Comintern. Repeatedly opposed the Party's Leninist policy: in November 1917, favoured the formation of a coalition government with the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries; in 1925, helped organise the New Opposition, and in 1926 became a leader of the anti-Party Trotsky-Zinoviev bloc. In 1934, was expelled from the Party for anti-Party activities.—17, 18 471-73, 475-79, 482, 485, 486, 487, 489, 492, 566-70, 651, 680, 688

*Zoff, Vyacheslav Ivanovich* (1889-1940)—Soviet Army leader and statesman; Party member from 1913; participant in the Civil War.—473

*Zubator, Sergei Uasilyevich* (1864-

1917)—colonel of the gendarmes, initiator and organiser of "police socialism" (Zubatovism). In 1901-03, organised police workers' societies with a view to diverting

the workers from the revolutionary struggle. Failed in his provocative activities, was dismissed, and withdrew from political life — 319

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